THE UNIVERSITY OF CHICAGO

MĪMĀṂSAKAS AND MĀDHYAMIKAS AGAINST THE BUDDHIST EPISTEMOLOGISTS: A COMPARATIVE STUDY OF TWO INDIAN ANSWERS TO THE QUESTION OF JUSTIFICATION

VOLUME ONE

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BY

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Na hi kiṃcid apūrvam atra vācyaṃ,
na ca saṃgranthanakauśalaṃ mamāsti /
Ata eva na me parārthacintā,
svamano vāsayituṃ kṛtaṃ mayedam //

"Nothing to be said here is new, and I do not have any skill in composition, so I do not have the illusion that I can benefit others. I have done this to perfume my own mind."

Śāntideva, *Bodhicaryāvatāra* 1.2

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The conventions peculiar to the genre of "prefatory acknowledgements" (a genre the study of which might itself warrant a dissertation) call for what amounts to a statement of humility in the form of expressions of gratitude to one's teachers. I regret the extent to which this rhetorical gesture has, by its almost ritualized invocation, been evacuated of meaning; for it has been my great good fortune to work with some truly impressive and inspiring people, before whom I do indeed feel very humble, and to whom I do indeed feel very grateful. Insofar as custom (together with a lack of imagination) constrains me, then, to express my gratitude in this formulaic way, I feel moved to emphasize that my gratitude and humility with respect to my teachers are nonetheless genuine.

In this spirit, I would like to thank Phil Niles and Bardwell Smith; Barbara Miller, Ted Riccardi, and Robert Thurman; Del Brown and Sheila Davaney. Special thanks are due to José Cabezón, for ongoing friendship and Buddhological gossip. It has been a particular privilege to work on a dissertation at the University of Chicago, where I have been lucky to have worked, from the inception of this project, closely and regularly with all of the members of my dissertation committee: Paul Griffiths (who first introduced me to serious philosophical thinking, and who continues to exemplify *kalyāṇamitratva*); Matthew Kapstein (who has succeeded in communicating to me only a very small percentage of his vast knowledge); and Sheldon Pollock (who taught me to read shastric Sanskrit and introduced me to the rich world of Pūrva Mīmāṃsā). The cliché about "standing on the shoulders of giants" certainly applies, in the case of this dissertation, to such past giants as the remarkable Louise de La Vallée Poussin (whose critical edition of the *Prasannapadā* would by itself distinguish a scholarly career, though it is but a small

part of his astonishing *oeuvre*); it is my particular good fortune that I am able to invoke this cliché as equally apt with respect to three scholars whom I have thus been able to count as teachers and mentors.

While I am not myself a Buddhist, there is a great deal that I admire in the Buddhist tradition. Among the many things that thus impress me is the tradition of dedicating merit. Thus, if there is any *merit* in this work, I would like to dedicate it to the welfare of all sentient beings. As for the work itself, I dedicate it to Deborah and Benjamin, from whom I have learned (and continue to learn) all of the most important things.

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CHAPTER 1
General Introduction: On Rational Reconstruction and the Question of Justification in Indian Religious Philosophy

One of the notions that has dominated Western philosophy since the Enlightenment is the idea that epistemology is "first philosophy." That is, Western philosophers since that time have been centrally concerned with the nature and limits of knowledge: with *how we know* what we know, and with what we are really entitled to claim that we *know*. Guided by this concern, they have generally felt constrained to argue only for those conclusions that are thought to be demonstrably founded on criteria in principle available to any rational person – with sensory perception being chief among these.

The requirement that the only valid criteria of knowledge are those believed to be universally available has particularly been deployed to rule out any appeal to special criteria such as tradition or "revelation," and has been an important ground rule in a world increasingly characterized by awareness of the competing claims of numerous and divergent traditions. But particularly in its early twentieth-century form (i.e., that of logical positivism), this demand that one be able to show the "epistemic credentials" of one's position significantly narrowed the field, with philosophical debate allowed to get off the ground only with respect to the kinds of claims that were ostensibly based in scientific observation. Not surprisingly, this trend had particularly deleterious effects in the philosophy of religions; for in its extreme form, the demand for epistemological foundations has seemed to many effectively to rule out religion as a subject of philosophical inquiry (with some of the characteristic claims of religious traditions

famously dismissed as "neither true nor false, but simply meaningless").[1] Among the more interesting of recent developments in the philosophy of religions have been several important critiques (of varying degrees of cogency) of the guiding belief behind this procedure – i.e., of the assumption that it is possible to demonstrate the reliability of belief-forming practices, such that we can know which are (and which are not) reliable ways of arriving at knowledge.[2]

In the form of *pramāṇavāda* ("discourse on reliable warrants"), epistemology occupied a similarly central position in the developed forms of Indian philosophy, and Sanskritic philosophical texts are characteristically marked by (among other things) an overriding concern with what are (and what are not) valid criteria of knowledge. Indeed, Sanskritic philosophical texts typically begin by enumerating the list of "reliable warrants" (*pramāṇas*) admitted by the school in question, and by showing why other possible candidates are reducible to these. Among the chief contributors to the refinement of the Indic discourse on reliable warrants were the "Buddhist Epistemologists" – that is, the school of thought most famously associated with the Indian Buddhist Dignāga (c.480-540 CE) and his commentator and follower, Dharmakīrti (c.600-660 CE). The approach advanced by this school is characterized by what might plausibly be said to be a fairly high degree of confidence in the intrinsic capacities of human reason.

Thus, the Buddhist Epistemologists helped advance, and adhered strictly to, what became pan-Indian rules for the statement of arguments in formal syllogisms. Moreover, what these Buddhists would admit as valid premises in these syllogisms had centrally to

[1] Among the works most famously (or notoriously, as the case may be) associated with such dismissals is Ayer 1952.

[2] For one useful point of access to the contemporary state of the field of philosophy of religion, see the essays collected in Wainwright 1996. Especially pertinent to the points made in this paragraph is the essay by Robert Adams (pp.79-87).

do with their particular confidence in the privileged status of sensory perception – a confidence ultimately born from the view that the goal of the Buddhist path could in principle be experienced by anyone, and did not depend (in particular) on the kinds of revelations or practices thought by Hindus to be available only to those with the proper birth. With this characterization in mind, we might say that the Buddhist Epistemologists could plausibly be characterized (with due qualification and circumspection) as having espoused a sort of foundationalism.[3] In view, however, of the much-abused character of this word, I will opt instead to speak chiefly in terms of their having raised the question of *justification*; for whatever else may be said about the influence these thinkers had on the course of Indian philosophy (and their influence was considerable), it is certainly appropriate to think of them as having refined what became, in Indian philosophy, a standard account of how beliefs are to be warranted or *justified*.[4]

While I am generally sympathetic with the Buddhist assessment of the human situation, I find myself unsympathetic with the approach commended by the Buddhist Epistemologists, and unable to share their confidence in the capacities of human reason.

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[3] In the contemporary context of "postmodernism" and "deconstruction," "foundationalism" has come to denote virtually anything that is the opposite of these trends. A much more useful understanding of some of the senses of the word (and arguments in play in relation thereto) in recent Anglo-American philosophy can be found in Alston 1976. Here, I would particularly commend Alston's first note (p.165): "Contemporary writers on foundationalism do not seem to notice that Descartes and Locke have a quite different view of knowledge and, hence, that, if they hold that knowledge rests on foundations, this will mean something rather different." This is particularly important for us to note, since I would urge that Locke (but not Descartes) represents a useful point of comparison for the Buddhist Epistemologists. In this regard, cf., *inter alia*, Chapter 2, n.83. As (it seems to me) Husserl rightly understood, Descartes's arguments, in contrast to those of Locke, are best understood as *transcendental* arguments, with Descartes's "method of doubt" comparable to Husserl's "phenomenological reduction." Indeed, if Husserl is right in thinking that Descartes compromised the essentially transcendental character of his own argument (i.e., by introducing "the apparently insignificant but actually fateful change whereby the ego becomes a *substantia cogitans*... and [the] point of departure for inferences according to the principle of causality"), then Descartes's type of argument really doesn't "found" anything in particular at all. See especially Husserl 1995: 18-25. It seems to me that Kant (the great advocate of transcendental arguments) understood Descartes in something like the way that Husserl did, taking Descartes's deployment of the *cogito* argument as a paradigmatic case of what Kant called a *paralogistic* argument – one according to which "we have ... what professes to be a science built upon the single proposition 'I *think*.'" (*Critique of Pure Reason*, A342/B400; Kant 1781, 1787: 329)

[4] An eminently lucid account of the course of Indian philosophy is provided by Ganeri 2001.

Accordingly, this dissertation consists in a study of two traditions of Indian philosophical thought that developed compelling critiques of the Buddhist Epistemologists. The first position I am considering emerges from one of the orthodox (indeed, perhaps the *most* "orthodox") Brahmanical schools of thought, that of Pūrva Mīmāṃsā. The constitutive concern of this school of thought is with the correct interpretation and understanding of the earliest Vedic literature. In the context of philosophical debate, then, adherents of this school – and notably Kumārila Bhaṭṭa (c.620-680 CE) and his subsequent commentators – made it their business to argue that the Vedic literature constitutes a valid criterion (and in their view, ultimately the *only* one) for knowledge pertaining to religious goals. Since it was the Buddhists who, in the context of Indian philosophy, most strenuously rejected the validity of the Vedas, members of the Mīmāṃsā school therefore particularly had to address Buddhist epistemological arguments in making their case. The other critique I consider comes from one of the Buddhist Epistemologists' co-religionists: the Indian Buddhist philosopher Candrakīrti (fl. c. 650 CE), one of the chief proponents of the Madhyamaka ("middle way") school. While the Mīmāṃsakas, as we will see, remain recognizably within the field of epistemological discourse, Candrakīrti advances what he considers to be particularly Buddhist reasons for altogether *rejecting* the kind of philosophical debate advanced by the Buddhist Epistemologists.

It is interesting to compare these two different critiques of the Buddhist Epistemologists not only because they emerge from such different contexts (and are thus deployed in the service of such different visions), but also because they represent two fundamentally different *kinds* of arguments against the Epistemologists' focus on "valid criteria of knowledge." Thus, on one hand, I will argue that the Mīmāṃsaka doctrine of "intrinsic validity" – which is the cornerstone of their defense against the Buddhists – is

best understood as a sort of *reformed epistemology*. I thus use a term often associated with such contemporary philosophers as William Alston, whose recent work in religious epistemology will provide us with some of the conceptual vocabulary for unpacking the Mīmāṃsaka position. To characterize the Mīmāṃsaka arguments as advancing a "reformed epistemology" is to suggest that the arguments for this doctrine largely accept the terms of discourse favored by the Buddhist Epistemologists, but invert the logic of that discourse. Candrakīrti's arguments, on the other hand, amount to a principled refusal of epistemology, a complete *subversion* of that discourse. That is, his arguments involve a fundamentally different *kind* of justification – with my hypothesis being that the logically distinct character of Candrakīrti's arguments is best understood if we take him to be making transcendental arguments. Among other things, then, I will be interested in appreciating the logically distinctive character of these two different critiques of the epistemological tradition associated with Dignāga and Dharmakīrti.

Since the chapters that follow will develop at length all of the various positions just sketched, I will say no more for the present about how best to characterize each of these, or how they are best understood. Instead, I will in this chapter offer a few remarks on my approach to the material. It is pertinent to note, first of all, that this dissertation is not concerned simply with the historical and philological task of restating in translation the arguments of these Indian philosophers. Rather, I am concerned to take these sources as representing philosophical interlocutors whose voices might be brought to bear on issues of concern to contemporary philosophers of religion. Thus, I am concerned to offer some philosophical assessment of the arguments retrieved, and to commend and advance these arguments where they seem to me to be promising. This is a difficult task, insofar as these Sanskritic philosophers lived and wrote in a place (the Indian subcontinent), at a time (with the thinkers considered here having written, roughly,

between the fifth and thirteenth centuries CE), and in a language (Sanskrit) quite remote from our own. To attempt, then, to understand their arguments in relation to trends in contemporary Western philosophy is, *ipso facto*, to engage in the task of *rational reconstruction* – that is, the "process of attempting to translate, without anachronism, a past philosopher's views into present idiom."[5]

My recourse to "present idiom" will already be clear from the fact that even my thumb-nail sketches of the various positions to be considered in this dissertation have used several terms (foundationalism, reformed epistemology, transcendental argument) that originate and have their respective senses specifically in the context of modern Western philosophy. In hopes of forestalling reactionary objections to such anachronism, I would commend as a particularly fruitful example Jonathan Bennett's *Study of Spinoza's* Ethics.[6] Bennett reconstructs Spinoza's doctrine of "substance monism" (i.e., the doctrine that there exists, in the final analysis, only one *substance*) in terms of the contemporary idea of a *field metaphysic*. What is striking about Bennett's study (and what ought, I think, to be taken as exemplary) is not only his perceptiveness and insight, but also his development of this reconstruction particularly based on what we might call the "principle of hermeneutical charity." That is, Bennett is concerned to attribute to Spinoza the best argument he can – which involves, among other things, attempting to save Spinoza's argument wherever it appears to involve incoherence or contradiction. Thus, summarizing the advantages of the idea of a "field metaphysic" for understanding Spinoza's counterintuitive substance monism, Bennett says that Spinoza's doctrine

> is doomed if it picks out some extended item from among the multitude: it must somehow pick out the totality of them. But there appears to be no way of doing

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[5] Cook 1993: 3. Patricia Cook here follows Richard Rorty in defining "rational reconstruction" specifically as one of the four historiographical genres Rorty has proposed as relevant to the study of philosophy's history.

[6] Bennett 1984. Several of Bennett's other works (e.g., 1966, 1971) might just as well be adduced in this regard.

> that, while still maintaining that the one substance does not have 'parts' in some damaging sense, except by supposing that that substance is not the whole assemblage of physical things but rather the one space which they occupy. And that seems to be Spinoza's view of the matter.[7]

Here, then, what is striking is not only that Bennett has (so it seems to me) developed an understanding of Spinoza that makes the latter's counterintuitive and arcane doctrines seem at once interesting and relevant; moreover, it is this eminently hermeneutic concern to keep from understanding Spinoza to have developed an argument that is "doomed," as Bennett takes it to be if read in what might be supposed to be a more straightforward way.

It is with such a concern in mind that I would venture the claim that some procedure such as "rational reconstruction" cannot finally be avoided if we are to stand any chance of engaging seriously with historically and culturally remote textual artifacts (if we are, that is, to stand any chance of *understanding* them). For how else can we understand such artifacts except by translating them? And how, more particularly, can we claim to have "translated" them if we do not also follow them conceptually? And how, finally, can we follow them conceptually except by evaluating them against the background of our own conceptual tools? Translation (to say nothing of *understanding*), then, cannot be thought of mechanistically as the simple transposition of a text into the equivalent words of another language, as consisting only in "construing" the grammar and syntax of a sequence of sentences. Anyone who has spent significant time reading Sanskrit philosophical texts (or indeed, the textual artifacts of any initially unfamiliar tradition of reasoning) will have had the experience of puzzling long over some recalcitrant passage, only to discover that what had seemed a grammatical difficulty turns out to have been a conceptual one – only to discover, that is, that one had all along "understood" what the sentence said, but had failed to see this insofar as its *point*

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[7] Bennett 1984: 103-4.

remained obscure. And there is no way to follow the larger logic of a discourse, to see the *point* of it, except by an effort at conceptual translation.

What I am suggesting, of course, is simply that rational reconstruction is best understood vis-à-vis what Dilthey characterized as the "hermeneutic circle." That is, any act of interpretation necessarily involves a dialectical tacking back and forth between the familiar and the unfamiliar, the part and the whole. Indeed, to recognize that one does not understand something, and that it therefore requires an effort at interpretation, is already to have *understood* something of it, to have *recognized* it as somehow unfamiliar. The effort at interpretation must then begin in terms of something *with respect to which* it is unfamiliar – the object of interpretation must, that is, be taken not as unfamiliar, *simpliciter*, but as an unfamiliar example *of something relevantly similar*, since otherwise there is no reason to desire understanding of it. And yet, properly to interpret the artifact in question is to allow the initial sense of familiarity to be called into question, to have one's initial sense of relevant concepts revised by what one learns about the object of interpretation.

Efforts at understanding, then, are in this way necessarily dialectical: it is only because there are moments of interpretive clarity that further engagement is possible; while further engagement, in turn, can reveal that the initial clarity had been founded on misguided comparisons that would be better abandoned. But the fact that one's initial points of comparison may thus be called into question does not mean it was wrong to have used them in the first place; our "preunderstandings" or "prejudices," as Gadamer appreciated, do not *impede* objective inquiry, they make it *possible*.[8] I submit, then, that my attempt thus to achieve the best rational reconstruction is, in part, simply a sound interpretive procedure – the procedure according to which, when trying to understand

[8] Gadamer 1989.

someone, we attribute the best possible arguments to them, and accordingly assume that apparent failures in sense or coherence reflect our own failure to understand, rather than failings on their part.

My concern to develop the best rational reconstruction, however, also goes beyond this interpretive principle; for I also think that these Indian philosophical works can help us to clarify our thinking about, and make some novel contributions to, philosophical debates such as are still very much alive today. Again, then, Gadamer is instructive: for us really to *understand* these works is for own prejudices or preunderstandings to have been changed by them. Thus, for example, in reconstructing Candrakīrti's arguments as transcendental arguments, it is reasonable to hope that we might learn something not only about Candrakīrti's Madhyamaka, but also about the logic of transcendental arguments more generally. This is so, moreover, even if the most interesting thing about such a reconstruction is, on the view of subsequent scholars of Madhyamaka, that it turns out to be wrong (if "wrong" is ever the right word for exercises in philosophical understanding); for our understanding may nevertheless have been advanced if someone finds it worth explaining *why* this reconstruction fails.

Of course, a great many scholars of Indian and Buddhist philosophy have similarly defended "rational reconstruction" – or, where they have not explicitly done so, have nevertheless deployed such an approach.[9] Still, prevailing trends in academia make

[9] For an explicit defense of such an approach, see, *inter alia*, Jackson 1989. Outstanding examples of scholars whose interpretive efforts have involved rational reconstruction include, in my view, Garfield 1995 and Dreyfus 1997a. Note that Ganeri (2001), though himself engaging in something very much like what I here discuss, uses the term "rational reconstruction" rather differently, entitling his chapter on the Buddhist Epistemologists (pp.97-127) "Reduction, exclusion and rational reconstruction." Ganeri thus uses the term to characterize what we will see is indeed a salient feature of the approach of Dignāga and Dharmakīrti – that is, their view that "the ontological commitments made by common sense are reducible to a much smaller, more parsimonious set" (97). Thus, Ganeri uses the expression "rational reconstruction" to denote an ontologically reductionist approach that, as it were, "reconstructs" a world out of the ontological primitives to which philosophical analysis has first reduced our common-sense categories. The characterization of this as "rational reconstruction" is actually quite apt, and particularly well captures one of the major differences between the Buddhist Epistemologists and Candrakīrti; for as we will see in Chapters 4 and 5, Candrakīrti will fault the Epistemologists chiefly for their meddling with ("reconstructing") conventions that, on his view, are better left as they are. Nevertheless, it is important to

it important to offer some remarks about how my approach relates to what Ben-Ami Scharfstein has aptly called the "dilemma of context." The prevailing trends to which I thus allude involve the influence of various types of relativism, one expression of which is the view that cultural artifacts can only be appreciated (indeed, that they only *make sense*) in their respective contexts. Scharfstein is, in my view, right to characterize such thoroughgoing relativism as one horn of a logical dilemma – one according to which we are asked to choose between *either* regarding artifacts in their proper contexts, *or* abstracting them therefrom. Scharfstein's sensitive reflections on these issues lead him ultimately to refuse the "two-valued logic" that thus insists on seeing here a dilemma (that is, a choice between two mutually exclusive alternatives) – to refuse, that is, the view that "every single thing should be identifiable as what it is, in other words, separated exactly from everything that it is not."[10] As Scharfstein appreciates, such a view is not exhaustively useful for such fathomlessly complex processes as that of interpretation. In particular, the "dilemma of context" can readily be seen as spurious if one points out that the *interpretive context* is itself a context: "How does one decide whether ... resemblances are real or not? Our answer in this instance too can be: context – but not mainly the context of the cultures involved but of the process by which it is decided what kind of answer to give."[11] The "dilemma of context," in other words, is simply another case of the "hermeneutic circle," and to force a decision for one horn of the dilemma or the other is, in effect, to force one to decide for (to *abstract*) only one moment in the necessarily *dialectical* process of understanding.

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note that Ganeri is not using the expression to describe what *he himself* is doing, though on my usage such would be the case.

[10] Scharfstein 1989: 141.

[11] *Ibid.*: 78.

This is not to say that I will be considering the various positions treated in this dissertation without due regard for their respective contexts. Indeed, particularly in the conclusion (Chapter 6), I will develop some reflections on the specifically philosophical importance of understanding that epistemological arguments such as we will engage cannot give us any purchase on the axiological commitments that finally motivate them – which is to say, the philosophical importance of understanding these positions in their respective soteriological *contexts*, which are finally such as to provide these different traditions of reasoning with the first principles (or, following Gadamer, the "prejudices") that are already presupposed in the various epistemological positions. I would emphasize again, then, that the effort at "rational reconstruction" represents only one moment in the interpretive dialectic, with attention to relevant context (which here includes, among other things, consideration of highly ramified commentarial traditions) necessarily remaining part of that dialectic. Moreover, when I return, in the Chapter 6, to more explicit reflections on context, I will do so finally in order to advance what I take to be a general philosophical point about what religious traditions of reasoning are (and indeed, what they *can*) be up to. I will develop these concluding reflections, however, having first proceeded through the following course of chapters:

Chapter 2 will provide a survey of the "Buddhist Epistemologists," with particular attention to the figure of Dignāga. I will not, however, provide a comprehensive account of Dignāga's thought (an exhaustive survey of which would require, *inter alia*, lengthy forays into his highly complex philosophy of language). Rather, I will attend only to those aspects of his thought that are at issue for the critics whose thought constitutes the principal subject of this dissertation. Thus, Chapter 2 will focus particularly on Dignāga's account of "perception" (*pratyakṣa*), and on the "concrete" or "bare particulars" (*svalakṣaṇas*) which he took to be the unique objects thereof. I will conclude

Chapter 2 by developing some philosophically generic reflections on what I take to be the points of vulnerability in Dignāga's thought, anticipating the ways in which the Mīmāṃsaka and Mādhyamika critics of the Buddhist Epistemologists will probe something like these vulnerabilities.

In Chapter 3, I will then develop the Mīmāṃsaka doctrine of "intrinsic validity" (*svataḥ prāmāṇya*), arguing that it can be seen as representing a cogent challenge to the approach of the Buddhist Epistemologists. Insofar as this doctrine has not, in my view, been sufficiently appreciated in a philosophically serious way, I will develop the arguments at length, attempting to elaborate a nuanced account of the various ways (attested both within the tradition and by contemporary scholars) of understanding what is being claimed. Thus, this survey will begin by considering antecedents to the doctrine in the foundational commentary of Śabara (perhaps c. 300 CE). I will then examine Kumārila's elaboration of Śabara's points in the *Ślokavārttika*, at once sketching the full-blown epistemological doctrine, and indicating points with respect to which Kumārila admits of divergent interpretations. I will then focus particularly on two such interpretations: that of Uṃveka (fl. c. 710), whose interpretation, in my view, ultimately compromises Kumārila's best insight; and that of Pārthasārathimiśra (fl. c. 1075), whose interpretation I will commend as both exegetically and philosophically preferable. (Appendix I then contains a complete translation of the relevant text from Pārthasārathimiśra: chapter 2 of his *Nyāyaratnamālā*, which is entitled *svataḥprāmāṇyanirṇaya*, "ascertainment of intrinsic validity.") Particularly in developing Pārthasārathi's views, I will deploy some of the conceptual vocabulary of William Alston, whose recent work in religious epistemology has some striking affinities. I will then conclude Chapter 3 by indicating why I would frame the Mīmāṃsaka doctrine

as a critique particularly of Buddhist epistemology, and by challenging some of the influential modern interpretations of it.

In Chapters 4 and 5, I will then develop my argument that Candrakīrti's Mādhyamika critique of Buddhist Epistemology is usefully understood in terms of *transcendental arguments*. (My general understanding of such arguments will be given in Chapter 4.) The principal focus here will be on a surprisingly under-studied passage of some twenty pages from the first chapter of Candrakīrti's *Prasannapadā*. In this passage, Candrakīrti anticipates and attempts to meet the objections and challenges of an unnamed Buddhist interlocutor, whose presuppositions are clearly characteristic of the Buddhist Epistemologists. (Appendix II contains an annotated translation of this complete passage. In my annotations to this translation, I will attempt, among other things, to demonstrate that Candrakīrti's unnamed interlocutor in this text is, in fact, Dignāga.) Exegesis of this one text would, I think, warrant a complete study in its own right. Insofar as this passage affords access to Candrakīrti's whole project, though, it has been useful and important to develop his argument with significant reference to other works of Candrakīrti. This has been particularly important to the extent that I wish to make the case for understanding Candrakīrti as having made transcendental arguments; for while I think this represents a very promising way to read Candrakīrti, it will here be particularly clear that mine is an effort at rational reconstruction, and it is important to attend to the several different aspects of Candrakīrti's thought that recommend such a reading.

Thus, it requires two chapters to make this case since I must argue on two fronts: I will be arguing, on one hand, that Candrakīrti considers the Epistemologist's peculiarly technical account of our epistemic practices to involve self-contradiction, insofar as the Epistemologist thus displaces the ordinary terms which his own argument nevertheless requires that he follow. In this regard, I will be suggesting that Candrakīrti's arguments

bear some affinities to arguments developed by such twentieth-century "ordinary language philosophers" as J. L. Austin and P. F. Strawson. On the other hand, it is important to be clear about *why* Candrakīrti is in principle committed to retaining ordinary language. In other words, what is rather harder (and in the end more important) to explain is how it is that Candrakīrti can think this fundamentally different kind of argument is *required* by his understanding of Buddhist commitments. In this regard, my characterization of Candrakīrti's as transcendental arguments will serve in part to advance my claim that, contrary to the views of many modern interpreters of Indian Madhyamaka, Candrakīrti's arguments involve a properly *metaphysical* claim.

I will argue, then, that Candrakīrti's transcendental argument against the Buddhist Epistemologists fits naturally with what are similarly transcendental arguments for the characteristic concerns of Candrakīrti's philosophy, insofar as what is for Candrakīrti the ultimate fact of existents (i.e., their emptiness) is to be understood not as a *property* things happen to have, but as a *condition of their possibility*. In the end, then, Candrakīrti's engagement with the Epistemologist cannot be considered apart from the rest of his project, a great deal of which is accordingly brought into play in my analysis of his critique. Thus, Chapter 4 lays out my understanding of transcendental arguments, and then develops Candrakīrti's critique particularly of the Epistemologist's characteristic usage of the word *svalakṣaṇa*. Insofar, however, as Candrakīrti ends up framing this critique in terms of some conceptual terms that figure quite importantly in what I take to be the clearest statement of Candrakīrti's metaphysical claim, this is a useful point at which to elaborate that claim. Chapter 4 thus culminates with an argument centering on the philosophically central (and oft-disputed) eighteenth verse of the 24th chapter of Nāgārjuna's *Mūlamadhyamakakārikā*, as interpreted in light of Candrakīrti.

Chapter 5 then returns to the engagement specifically with the Epistemologist, arguing that the transcendental argument against the Epistemologist's challenge is completed with respect to the Epistemologist's characteristic understanding of "perception" (*pratyakṣa*). Chapter 5 concludes with some reflections on how we might meet both philosophical and exegetical objections to the proposed reconstruction of Candrakīrti. I thus suggest that this reconstruction allows us to make sense of what are otherwise significant interpretive difficulties in Candrakīrti, and that Candrakīrti frames his whole project in such a way that he might be in a good position to meet some of the standard philosophical objections to transcendental arguments.

My consideration of the way that Candrakīrti frames his whole project – that is, in terms of a surprising epistemic humility vis-à-vis the fathomless compassion of the Buddha – then sets the tone for the more general concluding reflections of Chapter 6. Here, as I have noted, I will develop some reflections regarding the respective soteriological contexts of all of the positions we will have considered. In particular, I will argue that there are significant philosophical reasons for thinking that we cannot finally adjudicate between these various positions, none of which can finally offer compelling reason for choosing it above the others. In this connection, I will suggest that students of Indian philosophy would do well to be instructed by Pierre Hadot, who has derived from his studies in the thought of Western antiquity some hermeneutical lessons that are quite usefully applied, *mutatis mutandis*, in the context of studies in Sanskritic discursive traditions such as we are considering in this dissertation. In particular, if we appreciate some of the many indications in these texts that their producers and users exemplified what Hadot has characterized as "philosophy as a way of life," we will be in a position to understand that the arguments developed in the following chapters are not merely epistemological prolegomena to the respective practices of these various

traditions; rather, they are already *part* of those practices, and therefore already exemplify commitments to "first principles" that they do not (and probably cannot) finally help us to choose among.

It will be noticed, though, that despite these concluding reflections regarding the impossibility of any definitive adjudication between the various positions canvassed in this dissertation, Chapters 2 through 5 will have developed what is a generally critical account of Buddhist Epistemology, and generally sympathetic accounts of the critiques thereof that are to be found in the thought of the Bhāṭṭa Mīmāṃsakas and of the Mādhyamika Candrakīrti. Indeed, particularly those scholars whose principal expertise is in the epistemological tradition of Dignāga and Dharmakīrti may suspect some tendentiousness in my characterization of this school. Certainly, it goes without saying that more could be said in defense of their intuitions than I have undertaken to say in this dissertation. I believe, however, that the vulnerabilities I have identified in the approach of this school are indeed real, and that the critiques advanced by Mīmāṃsakas and Mādhyamikas are indeed cogent – and I believe, moreover, that to argue this is not to contradict the reflections I will develop in Chapter 6. Indeed, among the points I will urge in concluding is that the question of whether an argument *persuades* anybody is logically independent of the question of whether it is valid or true. The upshot of my concluding reflections, then, will simply be to the effect that there are good reasons for thinking that not everyone will be *persuaded* by any of the arguments canvassed here, and that this is perhaps as it should be – but that this says nothing about whether or not any of them might nonetheless be *true*.

More modestly, though, I would plead that studies in Indian philosophy (and particularly as these have been furthered under the aegis of Buddhist studies) have for too long been carried out under the shadow of Dignāga and Dharmakīrti. In this regard, it is

instructive to reflect on a recent remark from Eli Franco. In surveying the state of the field of Buddhist studies in Germany and Austria, Franco says, "Immodest as this may sound, I believe that I am currently the only 'German scholar' who specializes in Buddhist philosophy." In a note, he elaborates: : "I use 'philosophy' here in the technical sense as equivalent to *pramāṇaśāstra*. Some scholars may wish to consider Abhidharma or Yogācāra texts as philosophical texts. I cannot enter into this topic here; I merely want to make clear how I use the word 'philosophy' in the present context."[12] I do not adduce this quote by way of contesting Franco's territorial claim, which may well be valid. Rather, I adduce this as evidence of what seems to me a prevalent sleight-of-hand, according to which *epistemology* (or in this context, *pramāṇaśāstra*, "technical literature on reliable warrants") is equated with *philosophy, simpliciter*. What this obscures is the fact that there may be specifically *philosophical* reasons for refusing epistemology. Indeed, particularly my characterization of Candrakīrti's as transcendental arguments is finally meant to highlight precisely this point – that is, the logically distinctive character of Candrakīrti's arguments is such as to make it *in principle* important that he refuse the Epistemologist's demand for *a posteriori* justification.

It is, to be sure, possible that Franco does not intend his usage to be such as to exclude Candrakīrti (or the Mīmāṃsakas) from qualifying as an exemplar of "philosophy."[13] Certainly, there is a sense in which even Mādhyamikas such as Candrakīrti, in finding themselves compelled to contend with proponents of epistemology (*pramāṇavādinaḥ*), inevitably find themselves included in the purview of "*pramāṇaśāstra*," and perhaps Franco's comment could be read as simply pointing this out. And certainly, the Mīmāṃsakas, as we will see, do remain very much indeed within

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[12] Franco 1999: 430.

[13] And indeed, Franco 1987 represents an interesting study of a tradition of thought (that of the "Cārvākas") that is highly skeptical of most deployments of Indian epistemology.

the field of "*pramāṇaśāstra*" (though I will be arguing that their inversion of the terms of that discourse represents quite a significant revolution). It seems to me, however, that even if it is not Franco's intent to rule out such thinkers as Candrakīrti and the Mīmāṃsakas, his statement nevertheless reflects a prevailing prejudice that does not, in fact, leave much room for a full appreciation of how different are the approaches of the Mīmāṃsakas and of Candrakīrti from that exemplified by Dignāga and Dharmakīrti.

While I will conclude this dissertation, then, by reflecting on the impossibility of any final adjudication among these various schools of thought, I nevertheless have it in mind to commend both the Mīmāṃsaka and the Mādhyamika arguments as more worthy of serious consideration than, it seems to me, they have yet received. I am interested, then, in shifting attention to some of the other, and fundamentally different, *ways* of thinking philosophically in India, and in characterizing these *as* different ways to think philosophically. The importance of doing so is, it seems to me, evident in the relative neglect of the arguments I will examine. To a great many scholars of Buddhist studies, Mīmāṃsakas are familiar only for one of the stock examples of a fallacious syllogism standardly adduced by the Buddhist Epistemologists: "Sound (*śabda*) is eternal, since it is incorporeal, like space."[14] Moreover, as I will suggest in Chapter 3, even those scholars who have devoted sustained attention to Indian philosophy have often failed to appreciate the seriousness of Mīmāṃsaka contributions to epistemology.

More complicatedly, particularly those scholars whose primary acquaintance with Indian Madhyamaka is by way of the various Tibetan appropriations thereof are often inclined to think of Candrakīrti as compatible with the approach advanced by the

[14] *nityaḥ śabdo 'mūrtatvād ākāśavat*. See, e.g., Dharmottara's *Nyāyabinduṭīkā ad Nyāyabindu* 3.69 (Shastri 1985: 115). The standard non-fallacious syllogism with respect to *śabda* then goes: *anityaḥ śabdo kṛtakatvād, ghaṭavat* ("sound is impermanent, since it is made, like a pot"). I certainly do not mean to imply that Dharmakīrti (who rings the changes on these throughout his primer, the *Nyāyabindu*) did not have great familiarity with Mīmāṃsā, which he did. Where this stock syllogism comes to serve as an arid caricature is in the monastic textbooks of the later Tibetan traditions, where a great many Western students will have seen it.

epistemological tradition of Dignāga and Dharmakīrti. This is particularly so for the many scholars who are chiefly influenced by the Tibetan dGe-lugs-pa tradition, which is characterized both by its highly valuing the procedures thematized by Dignāga and Dharmakīrti, and by its commending Candrakīrti as definitively normative. Thus, for example, José Cabezón, in noting that Candrakīrti espouses the fourfold list of *pramāṇas* standardly upheld by the Nyāya tradition,[15] considers it "a conundrum why Candrakīrti chose to cite four types of valid cognitions (as the Naiyāyikas do, for example), and not the standard two of Dignāga and Dharmakīrti."[16] As we will see quite clearly in Chapters 4 and 5, though, Candrakīrti's point in doing this was not incidental; rather, Candrakīrti's endorsement of the Nyāya list of *pramāṇas* comes as the pointed conclusion to a sustained critique of the Epistemologist's entire approach. If there is a "conundrum" here, then, it does not have to do with Candrakīrti's list of *pramāṇas*; rather, it involves interesting historical and philosophical questions about how this Tibetan tradition could at once claim Candrakīrti as normative, and at the same time retain precisely the epistemological discourse he so clearly dismisses.[17]

If, against the recognition of these important questions, it is urged that Candrakīrti's point here represents simply a curious anomaly, that is, I submit, partly

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[15] Cf., Chapter 5, n.34; and Appendix II, n.85.

[16] Cabezón 1992: 454n. Cabezón is here influenced, it seems, by the dGe-lugs-pa scholar mKhas-grub-rje, the following passage from whom Cabezón here comments on: "... the *Prasannapadā* says: 'therefore they posit that it is by means of the four valid cognitions [*pramāṇas*] that the world comes to an understanding of objects.' In this way it explains that by means of the four valid cognitions, that is, direct perception (*mngon sum*), inference (*rjes dpag*), scripture (*lung*), and comparison (*nyer 'jal*), one posits the conventional, [proving that the Mādhyamikas do not in general repudiate the notion of a valid cognition]." (*Ibid.*: 118; the final insertion in brackets is Cabezón's) mKhas-grub-rje thus takes the force of Candrakīrti's point here to be that he generally admits *pramāṇavāda* – when in fact, as will clearly emerge in Chapters 4 and 5, the salient point of the passage is its concluding what Candrakīrti took to be a resounding critique of precisely the epistemological tradition to which dGe-lugs-pas such as mKhas-grub-rje wanted to wed Candrakīrti. Cabezón here translates from mKhas-grub-rje's citation of a passage of the *Prasannapadā* that is to be found at La Vallée Poussin 1970b: 75.6; cf., Appendix, n.85. See also Chapter 2, n.13, for more on the question of what is "standardly" admitted by Buddhists in this regard.

[17] There is, in fact, a growing recognition on the part of contemporary scholars that these are real questions. See, e.g., the collection of essays edited by McClintock and Dreyfus (forthcoming), especially that of Tillemans (2000).

because of the prevailing view (reflected in Franco's comment) that the approach of Dignāga and Dharmakīrti is co-extensive with "Indian philosophy," which is then definitively characterized in terms of its deploying the canons of reasoning thematized in their works. Against such a view, I want to urge that the Sanskritic tradition attests philosophically serious alternatives to this approach other than Nyāya. In characterizing Mīmāṃsakas as having "inverted" the logic of Buddhist epistemology, and in characterizing Candrakīrti's principled refusal thereof in terms of transcendental arguments, I thus mean to emphasize that both are cogent and eminently *philosophical* critiques of the Buddhist Epistemologists' demand for justification. While I will conclude this dissertation, then, by offering some more general reflections on the contexts and limits of philosophical reasoning, I also entertain the more modest hope specifically that the Mīmāṃsaka and Mādhyamika critics of Buddhist Epistemology will receive more serious attention than they have so far – that the Mīmāṃsaka doctrine of "intrinsic validity" will be seen as representing a philosophically serious and tenable position, and that Candrakīrti's critique of Buddhist Epistemology will not be seen as an incidental and negligible tangent to his work, but rather, as a move that is coherent with (and possibly required by) what are thought to be Candrakīrti's more characteristic concerns. There are, I would have us appreciate, alternative answers to the question of justification so influentially posed by the Buddhist Epistemologists.

CHAPTER 2
Raising the Question of Justification: A Critical Survey of Buddhist Epistemology

2.i. Introduction: On reading Dignāga

In the form of *pramāṇavāda* (the "discourse on reliable epistemic warrants"), epistemology occupied a central position in the developed forms of Indian philosophy. Among the key contributors to the cultivation of this discourse were two Indian Buddhist figures: Dignāga (or *Diṅnāga*, c. 480-540 CE) and Dharmakīrti (c.600-660 CE).[1] Among modern scholars, these two figures have been closely associated with one another ever since Th. Stcherbatsky's still useful study surveyed their works as exemplifying *Buddhist Logic*.[2] In this regard, Stcherbatsky follows the lead of the Indo-Tibetan tradition, which similarly takes Dignāga and Dharmakīrti together as the paradigmatic exemplars of what the Tibetan polymath Bu-ston characterized as the "science of reasons,"[3] and what, in a doxographic vein, the Tibetan dGe-lugs-pa tradition characterizes as the school of "Sautrāntikas who follow reasoning."[4] This association of the two reflects the traditional view (which originates with Dharmakīrti himself) that

[1] These dates, which are generally accepted, are from Frauwallner 1961b. For a very useful assessment of the contribution of these figures to the larger context of classical Indian philosophy, see, e.g., Ganeri 2001: 97-127.

[2] This is the title of Stcherbatsky's two-volume study of this tradition of thought, first published in 1932. A survey of scholarship on the tradition (with particular attention to the question of the extent to which Dignāga ought or ought not to be understood vis-à-vis Dharmakīrti) is to be found in Hayes 1988: 9-32. In the survey presented in the present chapter, I have been particularly informed by Hayes, as well as by the annotated translation of Hattori (1968), and by the more recent works on Dharmakīrti by Jackson (1993), Dreyfus (1997b), and Dunne (1999).

[3] Skt., *hetuvidyā*; Tib., *gtan-tshigs-rig-pa*. Cf., Obermiller 1931: 44, and n.413.

[4] See, e.g., the *Grub pa'i mtha'i rnam par bzhag pa rin po che'i 'phreng ba* of dKon mchog 'jigs med dbang po (Mimaki 1977: 84), which gives as the two types of Sautrāntika: *luṅ gi rjes 'braṅ gi mdo sde pa daṅ / rigs pa'i rjes 'braṅ gi mdo sde pa* ("Sautrāntikas who follow scripture, and those who follow reasoning"; the latter is probably based on Skt. *nyāyānusārisautrāntika*).

some of Dharmakīrti's most important works are to be understood as commentaries on Dignāga's *Pramāṇasamuccaya*, which is thus considered foundational for this tradition of thought.[5]

To the extent that I am concerned with critiques of the Buddhist epistemological tradition that originate with the Mīmāṃsaka Kumārila Bhaṭṭa (chapter 3) and the Mādhyamika Candrakīrti (chapter 4), it is fitting that our survey of the Buddhist epistemological tradition focus particularly on Dignāga's foundational text; for according to the generally accepted relative chronology, Dharmakīrti was roughly contemporaneous with both Kumārila (620-680) and Candrakīrti (fl. c. 650).[6] Thus, while Kumārila's commentators make ample reference to Dharmakīrti (as also to Dignāga), Kumārila himself seems to have referred only to Dignāga, and it will similarly become clear, in the translation from Candrakīrti's *Prasannapadā* appended to chapters 4 and 5, that Candrakīrti seems only to have known Dignāga's works.

While it is therefore important that we particularly understand Dignāga, this task nevertheless presents significant interpretive difficulties. Unlike the case of Dharmakīrti (several of whose works survive in the original Sanskrit), Dignāga's works come down to us only in Tibetan translation.[7] Moreover, in the case of the *Pramāṇasamuccaya*, what we have are in fact *two* often quite divergent Tibetan translations, a state of affairs which reflects Richard Hayes's contention that the available translations "show signs of having been done by translators who were themselves not certain of the meanings of many passages in the original texts...."[8] The available texts of Dignāga's works are thus more

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[5] For a traditional view of how Dharmakīrti's works relate to Dignāga's, cf., Obermiller 1931: 44-5.

[6] These are the dates provided by Potter 1970.

[7] Randle (1926) has compiled such Sanskrit fragments of Dignāga as can be gleaned from the quotations of him in other extant works of Indian philosophy.

[8] Hayes 1988: 6. Note that Hattori's edition and translation of the first chapter of the *Pramāṇasamuccaya* (1968) gives editions of *both* Tibetan translations (i.e., the one supervised by the Indian *paṇḍita* Vasudhararakṣita, and the one supervised by Kanakavarman). Both Hayes and Hattori take the translation of Kanakavarman as their basic text.

than a little underdetermined. Even more than is typically the case with respect to the characteristically elliptical works of Indian philosophers, then, a full understanding of Dignāga requires recourse to his commentators. It is therefore not surprising that a great many modern scholars have followed Stcherbatsky's lead, and have read Dignāga primarily through the lens of Dharmakīrti, whose works are, after all, the earliest surviving "commentaries" on Dignāga. Recently, however, several scholars have urged that Dharmakīrti is a commentator in name only, and that his works in fact represent innovative departures from Dignāga's works. Indeed, Radhika Herzberger has gone so far as to urge that "Diṅnāga's thought is not encompassed by the greater depth of Dharmakīrti's, rather it is washed away by it."[9] More helpful in reading the *Pramāṇasamuccaya*, scholars such as Hayes urge, is the commentary of Jinendrabuddhi,[10] which sticks more closely to Dignāga's text. Not only does Jinendrabuddhi's commentary survive only in Tibetan translation, though, but it is also the case that Jinendrabuddhi (800-850) post-dates Dharmakīrti,[11] so that *Jinendrabuddhi himself* tends to read Dignāga through the lens of Dharmakīrti.[12]

Fortunately, it is not necessary that we finally settle all of the complex hermeneutical issues involved in distinguishing Dignāga from Dharmakīrti; for insofar as I am chiefly interested in the Mīmāṃsakas and in Candrakīrti as critics of the tradition of thought initiated by Dignāga, it is most important simply that we come to some understanding of the issues in question *for these critics*. We do not need, in other words,

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[9] Herzberger 1986: 241; quoted at Hayes 1988: 30. Hayes shares Herzberger's assessment, adding that Dharmakīrti "also washed away much of the accomplishment of the Buddha as well." (p.310) More on the tendentiousness of Hayes's reading in concluding this chapter.

[10] The *Viśālāmalavatīnāmapramāṇasamuccayaṭīkā*, which, like Dignāga's work, survives only in Tibetan translation (as the *Yangs-pa dang dri-ma med-pa ldan-pa shes-bya-ba tshad-ma kun-las-btus-pa'i 'grel-bshad*, Tohoku 4268).

[11] Dates per Potter 1970.

[12] Cf., Hayes 1988: 224-6, for comments on Jinendrabuddhi's nevertheless being preferable to Dharmakīrti as a commentator on Dignāga.

to develop a complete understanding of the entire edifice of Dignāga's thought or a compellingly nuanced account of its differences from Dharmakīrti's; rather, it is necessary only that we come to some understanding specifically of the aspects of this tradition of thought that are particularly at issue for the figures who represent the principal subject of this dissertation. For purposes of the present dissertation, then, we do not need to address such complex issues as the Epistemologists' characteristic "exclusion" theory of meaning (*anyāpoha*) – something that is, to be sure, very much at issue for the Mīmāṃsakas (though not for Candrakīrti, who seems strangely silent on the subject), but not in the part of their project that I will be examining (i.e., the elaboration of a doctrine of "intrinsic validity"). Rather, what we particularly require is some understanding of what are, for both Dignāga and Dharmakīrti, the closely correlated notions of "perception" (*pratyakṣa*) and "unique particulars" (*svalakṣaṇa*).

In this regard, one of the things that can safely be said to characterize both Dignāga and Dharmakīrti is the fact of their having espoused a peculiarly parsimonious ontology, to which corresponds a commensurately parsimonious epistemology. Thus, for both of these thinkers, *svalakṣaṇas* (which the two perhaps understood differently) represent one of the only two *kinds* of things that exist (the other being *sāmānyalakṣaṇas*, or "abstractions"), and the only kind of thing that *ultimately* exists; and both understand these as the unique objects of the epistemic faculty of perception, which is admitted as one of only two *pramāṇas*. This characteristically spare epistemology alone is sufficient to mark Dignāga and Dharmakīrti as belonging together; for in commonly advancing such an account, both of these thinkers represent a departure from the earlier tradition, which had explicitly allowed the reliable testimony of tradition (*āptāgama*) as a *pramāṇa*.[13]

[13] See, for example, *Abhidharmakośabhāṣyam ad* 2.46a-b (Pradhan 1975: 76), where the characteristic disagreement between Vaibhāṣikas and Sautrāntikas (cf., e.g., n.22, below) deploys the following move: *na hy ete jātyādayo dharmā dravyataḥ saṃvidyante yathā-abhivyajyante. Kiṃ kāraṇam? Pramāṇābhāvāt. Na hy eṣāṃ dravyato 'stitve kiṃcid api pramāṇam asti pratyakṣam anumānam āptāgamo vā yathā*

Thus, I will attempt a brief explication of Dignāga's account specifically of the correlated categories of *pratyakṣa* and *svalakṣaṇa*. To the extent that Dharmakīrti may be characterized as having further developed points along the same trajectory of thought, Dharmakīrti's works are often useful for providing one articulated view of what Dignāga's commitments implied. Moreover, to the extent that Candrakīrti, as I will argue, disagrees *in principle* with Dignāga's approach, any differences between Dignāga and Dharmakīrti are not such as will improve Dignāga's project from Candrakīrti's perspective (if anything, Dharmakīrti quite likely exacerbates what Candrakīrti sees as the problems with Dignāga's approach). It is therefore useful and not inappropriate to make some reference to Dharmakīrti's works as well, though I will nevertheless try to remain clear on how they differ from Dignāga's. Without any further ado, then, let us trace the development of some characteristically Ābhidharmika intuitions to their culmination in the arguments of Dignāga and Dharmakīrti.

2.ii. Dignāga on *svalakṣaṇas*: Culmination and transformation of Ābhidharmika notions

From Candrakīrti's perspective (as we will see), it is the category of *svalakṣaṇa* that particularly governs Dignāga's system, with Dignāga's intuitions regarding *svalakṣaṇas* particularly served by his account of *pratyakṣa* (rather than the converse). That is, Candrakīrti's view is that perception is tendentiously (and emphatically) defined

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rūpādīnāṃ dharmāṇām iti ("for these dharmas such as genus do not exist substantially, as simply manifested. Why? Because there is no reliable warrant [with respect to them]; for in regard to their existing substantially, there is no reliable warrant whatsoever, whether perception, inference, or a tradition of reliable witnesses, as there is [in the case] of dharmas such as form"). See also Asaṅga's *Abhidharmasamuccaya*, 2.4 ("*sāṃkathyaviniścaya*"), where an eightfold classification of *sādhana* ("probative argument") interestingly collapses what are, on later accounts, the members of a syllogism (e.g., *pratijñā, hetu, dṛṣṭānta*), and the *pramāṇas* that warrant it. As for the latter, the list again includes *pratyakṣa*, *anumāna*, and *āptāgama*; see Rahula 1980: 182. On Asaṅga's views, see also Wayman 1958. As we will see in Chapters 4 and 5, the question of what *pramāṇas* our epistemic faculties conventionally involve is among the points on which Candrakīrti will criticize Dignāga, with Candrakīrti ultimately opting for the fourfold list endorsed by Naiyāyikas.

by Dignāga as being "free of conceptual elaboration" mainly in hopes that some part of the cognitive process can be thought to yield access to something that is "really" existent, with *svalakṣaṇas* fitting this description. The notion of *svalakṣaṇas* has, moreover, a long lineage in Buddhist thought, forming a central (if sometimes ambiguous) part of the Ābhidharmika account of the Buddhist project of reductionism. Indeed, Dignāga's understanding of *svalakṣaṇa* may be said to represent the logical culmination of characteristically Ābhidharmika intuitions regarding *dharmas*. That this is the trajectory of thought advanced by Dignāga is reflected not only in the traditional view that he was a disciple of Vasubandhu,[14] but also in the fact that Dignāga himself wrote a concise commentary on Vasubandhu's *Abhidharmakośa*.[15] Accordingly, it is appropriate for us to start with the Ābhidharmika discussions in which the notion of *svalakṣaṇa* figures.

According to standard Ābhidharmika accounts of the Buddhist reductionist project, *dharmas* are the really (though fleetingly) existent elements that survive characteristically Buddhist reductionist analysis; *dharmas* are, in other words, the elements *to which* existents (and paradigmatically, of course, *persons*) can be reduced, and a great deal of Ābhidharmika literature is devoted to the enumeration of the "*dharmas*" which should thus be permitted into a final ontology (where "ontology" thus has something like its standard meaning of a catalogue of ontologically primitive categories). A standard such enumeration, for example, lists 75 *dharmas* that constitute the ontological primitives upon which all other, derivative existents are supervenient.[16]

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[14] Cf., e.g., Chimpa (1970: 182) for a translation from Tāranātha's *chos-'byung*.

[15] The *Abhidharmakośavṛttimarmapradipa* (*Chos mngon pa'i mdzod kyi 'grel pa gnad kyi sgron mo*, Tohoku 4095), which is no longer extant in Sanskrit. For a bibliography of works attributed to Dignāga, see Hattori 1968: 6-10.

[16] Cf., Cox 1995: 12; Chaudhuri 1976: 14(a). The language of "supervenience" is borrowed from Kapstein (1987: 90, ff.). Note that my characterization of an "Ābhidharmika" position is ideal-typical, chiefly following Vasubandhu's *Abhidharmakośabhāṣyam*, and bracketing the vast and divergent literature that might also be characterized as "Ābhidharmika." Note, too, that the attribution to "Ābhidharmikas" of systematic philosophical positions is not without risk – specifically, risk of misrepresenting what they were up to. (Cf., in this regard, n.23, below.) In reconstructing a specifically ontological position, then, I am chiefly motivated by my sense of the intuitions that Candrakīrti finds objectionable in the approach of Ābhidharmikas, and am trying to systematize specifically these intuitions.

Note, though, that the idea of there being 75 *dharmas* is not the idea that there exist only 75 unique particulars in the world; rather, these clearly delineate 75 ontologically primitive *categories* – types of which there can be, presumably, innumerable tokens. Significantly, Ābhidharmika notions of *dharmas* are closely related to what are, in this literature, the conceptually cognate notions of *svalakṣaṇa* (in this context, "defining characteristic") and *svabhāva* ("essence" or "intrinsic nature"). Thus, for example, Vasubandhu's *Abhidharmakośabhāṣyam* explains that *dharmas* (literally, "bearers") are so called "because they bear (√*dhṛ*) *svalakṣaṇas*."[17] That is, what distinguishes something as exemplifying one of the 75 categories of ontological primitives (one of the *dharmas*) is the fact of its sharing the same defining characteristic that is common to all instantiations of that *dharma*.

Moreover, that these "defining characteristics" are here thought to relate to a specifically ontological correlate is clear from the conflation of *svalakṣaṇa* ("defining characteristic") with *svabhāva* ("essence"). Thus, for example, Vasubandhu's *Abhidharmakośabhāṣyam* at one point comments: "The body is investigated in terms of its defining and general characteristics. Feeling and thought are dharmas; the essence of these is their defining characteristic."[18] That is, "feelings" (*vedanā*) and "thoughts" (*citta*), in virtue of their possessing the "essence" (*svabhāva*) which is their being defined as irreducible, count as factors which belong in a final ontology. The "defining characteristics" (*svalakṣaṇa*) in question, then, are specifically those that irreducibly individuate the 75 categories that, on one widely accepted version of the Ābhidharmika project, constitute the most basic ontology. What such defining (or "unique") characteristics are unique to, in other words, is the 75 categories that alone are admitted

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[17] Pradhan 1975: 2.10: *svalakṣaṇadhāraṇād dharmaḥ*. On the connection with *svabhāva*, cf., also, Cox 1995: 12; and n.18, below.

[18] *Ad Abhidharmakośa* 6.14c-d (Pradhan 1975: 341.11-12): *Kāyaṃ svasāmānyalakṣaṇābhyāṃ parīkṣate. Vedanāṃ cittaṃ dharmāś ca. Svabhāva evaiṣāṃ svalakṣaṇam.*

as the irreducible categories of ontological primitives. Thus, to bear such a "defining characteristic" or "essence" is, in effect, to qualify for inclusion in this final ontology.

Among the significant points about this understanding of *svalakṣaṇas* is that each of these amounts to a sort of *property* belonging to a *dharma*. That is, this discourse speaks of *dharmas* as the irreducible remainder of reductionist analysis, and speaks of these, in turn, as individuated or characterized by the defining properties that belong to them – as, for example, perceptual awareness (*vijñāna*) is definitively characterized in terms of some "conception regarding an object" (*viṣayaprativijñapti*), or as earth (*pṛthivī*) is definitively characterized by "hardness" or "resistance" (*khara* or *kāṭhinya*).[19] There is thus an important sense in which the *svalakṣaṇas* in virtue of which *dharmas* qualify as such are, in fact, universals or abstractions; for, say, the fact of being a "conception regarding an object" is something that belongs to (and definitively characterizes) *every* instance of perceptual awareness – characterizes each, that is, as a token of the *type* of thing that belongs in a final ontology. The abstract nature of such "defining characteristics" figures particularly prominently in Sarvāstivādin arguments for the existential status of past and future moments of time. Thus, as Collett Cox explains,

> The term "intrinsic nature" [*svalakṣaṇa*] does not indicate a factor's [i.e., *dharma*'s] temporal status, but rather refers to its atemporal underlying and defining nature. Intrinsic nature thus determines the atemporal, existential status of a factor as a real entity (*dravya*). Nevertheless, it is precisely in this sense of intrinsic nature that factors can be said to exist at all times (*svabhāvaḥ sarvadā cāsti*); intrinsic nature, as the particular inherent characteristic, pertains to or defines a factor in the past, present, and future, regardless of its temporal status. (1995: 139)

But even for Sautrāntikas who, following Vasubandhu's *Abhidharmakośabhāṣyam*, reject this specifically temporal application of the point, it is nevertheless the case that the *svalakṣaṇas* that individuate existents as belonging to one or another dharmic category

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[19] The adducing of *viṣayaprativijñapti* as the *svalakṣaṇa* of *vijñāna* occurs at *Abhidharmakośa* 1.16a (Pradhan 1975: 11), and *khara* as that of *pṛthivī* at *Abhidharmakośa* 1.12 (*Ibid.*: 8). For *kāṭhinya* as synonymous with *khara*, cf., *Ibid.*: 24.3, 78.7-8. These are the examples of *svalakṣaṇa* which, as we will see in Chapter 4, Candrakīrti adduces contra Dignāga.

are fundamentally abstract. This is, I will suggest, among the salient points that will be transformed by Dignāga's use of the term.

While macro-objects such as (paradigmatically) persons can thus be reduced to their basic parts, such reductionist analysis is thought by Ābhidharmikas to be capable of reaching bedrock, in the form of the *dharmas* that are individuated by uniquely defining characteristics. In Ābhidharmika literature, this intuition that reductionist analysis can yield ontological primitives is also advanced in terms of a debate regarding what is *dravyasat* and what is *prajñaptisat* – that is, regarding, respectively, what "exists as a substance," and "what exists as a *prajñapti*."[20] Paul Williams, borrowing from Brentano, aptly renders these as (respectively) *primary* and *secondary* existence,[21] and emphasizes that what is at stake here is not so much *what* exists, as *how* it exists. Thus, things that exist as *prajñapti* (*prajñaptitaḥ*) are invariably reducible to things that exist as ontological primitives (*dravysat*), which in turn exist irreducibly. In Vasubandhu's massive *Abhidharmakośa* and his *bhāṣya* thereon, the most prominently recurrent debate concerns the question of precisely *which* things are to be admitted as being *dravyasat*. Thus, if we follow the traditional doxographic view (according to which Vasubandhu's commentary reflects a Sautrāntika critique of the Vaibhāṣika perspective reflected in the *kārikās*), we might characterize the Vaibhāṣikas as ontologically promiscuous, and the Sautrāntikas as ontologically parsimonious; for throughout the course of Vasubandhu's massive work, various Buddhist categories are introduced and considered, with the Vaibhāṣikas characteristically asserting that they exist *dravyatas* ("substantially"), and

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[20] I leave *prajñapti* untranslated for the present because an important part of Candrakīrti's exegesis of Nāgārjuna will depend on this term. A standard translation is "concept" (cf., e.g., Warder 1971), but I will argue in Chapter 4 that, particularly as deployed by Burton (1999), this translation is highly misleading.

[21] Williams 1981. This is one of the best discussions of the conceptual motivation behind Ābhidharmika discussions of *dravyasat* and *prajñaptisat*. See also the discussion by Kapstein (1987: 90, ff.).

the Sautrāntikas invariably rejoining that, in fact, they only exist *prajñaptitas* ("derivatively" or "superveniently," we might say).[22]

The reason it matters so much how these terms are allocated is that, given the intuitions that motivate the Ābhidharmika project, what is *dravyasat* ("substantially" or "primarily existent") is, *ipso facto*, admitted as being *paramārthasat* ("ultimately existent," "real," or "true"). On this view, in other words, the characteristically Buddhist contention that there are two levels of "truth" ("conventional truth," *saṃvṛtisatya*, and "ultimate truth," *paramārthasatya*) has a specifically ontological correlate: what is *conventionally* true is what is reducible, by way of critical analysis, to what is ultimately real; the latter category, in turn, thus consists in an enumerable set of ontological primitives. Vasubandhu's *Abhidharmakośa* makes this point explicitly:

> There are also two truths, conventional truth and ultimate truth. What are the characteristics of these two? ... The conventionally true is that with respect to which the concept does not arise when it is broken into parts, as for example a jar; for with respect to that, when it is broken into pieces (*kapālaśo bhinne*), the idea of a jar does not arise. And that with respect to which, having excluded other *dharmas* by way of the intellect, the idea does not arise – that, too, should be known as conventionally true, as for example water; for with respect to that, having excluded, through the intellect, other *dharmas* such as form, the idea of water does not arise. Everything else is ultimately true; with respect to this, even when broken, the idea still arises, even when other *dharmas* are excluded by way of the intellect – that is ultimately true, as for example, form.[23]

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[22] So, for example, the famous debate, in the fifth chapter of the *Abhidharmakośa*, regarding the existential status of past, present, and future moments. The characteristically Vaibhāṣika claim is that all three "really" exist, and that this reflects the proper interpretation of the Buddhist text (*sarvam asti*, "everything exists") which gives adherents of this school the name "Sarvāstivāda" (the "'everything exists'-affirmers"). Vasubandhu the Sautrāntika rejoins that he does not deny *that* these exist; he simply rejects the Vaibhāṣika claim regarding *how* they exist. Thus, "We, too, say the past exists; but the past is what existed previously, and the future will exist with respect to [presently] existent causes. And in this sense they exist, *but not substantially*." (Pradhan 1975: 299.1ff: *vayam api brūmo 'sty atītānāgatam iti; atītaṃ tu yad bhūtapūrvam, anāgataṃ yat sati hetau bhaviṣyati. Evaṃ ca kṛtvā-astity ucyate na tu punar dravyataḥ*.) On this whole debate, see Williams (1981) and Cox (1995, *passim*), who both provide very illuminating discussions.

[23] Pradhan 1975: 333-4: *dve api satye saṃvṛtisatyaṃ parmārthasatyaṃ ca. Tayoḥ kiṃ lakṣaṇam?... Yasminn avayavaśo bhinne na tad buddhir bhavati tat saṃvṛtisat, tadyathā ghaṭaḥ; tatra hi kapālaśo bhinne ghaṭabuddhir na bhavati. Tatra ca-anyān apohya dharmān buddhyā tad buddhir na bhavati taccāpi saṃvṛtisad veditavyam, tadyathā-ambu; tatra hi buddhyā rūpādin dharmān apohya-ambubuddhir na bhavati.... Atonyathā paramārthasatyam; tatra bhinne 'pi tad buddhir bhavaty eva; anyadharmāpohe 'pi buddhyā tat paramārthasat, tadyathā rūpam.*

Note, though, that Vasubandhu's "ontological" expression of the two truths here follows his discussion of the more "soteriological" category of the "Four Noble Truths" (*Abhidharmakośa* 6.2, ff.; Pradhan 1975: 327, ff.). There is a sense, then, in which Vasubandhu may be said simply to be performing

Collett Cox explains: "If the notion of a particular entity disappears when that entity is broken (e.g., a pot) or can be resolved by cognition into its components (e.g., water), that entity exists only conventionally. Entities that are not subject either to this further material or mental analysis exist absolutely. Thus, actual existence as a real entity (*dravyasat*) is attributed only to the ultimate constituent factors, which are not subject to further analysis."[24] As an example of the latter, Vasubandhu has here adduced the case of "form" (*rūpa*) – presumably in the sense of the first of the five *skandhas*.[25]

That the foregoing represents the basic set of intuitions inherited by Dignāga is perhaps most clear in his *Ālambanaparīkṣā* ("examination of intentional objects"). This very short text – which consists in only eight *kārikās* together with a brief auto-commentary – represents Dignāga's attempt to argue that awareness can satisfactorily be explained provided only that we posit some *mental* phenomena as the "objects" intended by awareness; and indeed, that we cannot coherently posit any non-mental, external objects as what is directly intended by awareness. The latter is true, for Dignāga, insofar as any account of external objects necessarily presupposes some version of minimal part atomism, which Dignāga argues cannot coherently be adduced to explain our awareness of macro-objects. Clearly, Dignāga's argument here owes something to Vasubandhu's

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one of the characteristic functions of Sanskritic commentators, and ringing the changes on a series of standard lists and schema (two truths, four truths, etc.) – a function that we may, anticipating some of my conclusions in Chapter 6, characterize as "catechetical." Again, then, in focusing on this specifically ontological expression, I am teasing out specifically those aspects of the Ābhidharmika approach that Candrakīrti is most concerned to challenge. The attribution of a philosophical position to these "Ābhidharmikas," then, is meant chiefly to underscore such differences from Candrakīrti as will become clear in Chapters 4 and 5; cf., n.16, above.

[24] Cox 1995: 138-9. Cf., Williams 1981: 237: "Saṃghabhadra [i.e., the Vaibhāṣika whose *Nyāyānuśara* – now extant only in Chinese translation – is traditionally held to represent a rejoinder to Vasubandhu's Sautrāntika criticisms] adds that the distinction between primary and secondary existence corresponds to that between ultimate and conventional truth (*paramārtha* and *saṃvṛtisatya*). This point is extremely important for it shows that in the Sarvāstivāda the distinction between *satyas* was not soteriological but primarily philosophical, in this case ontological."

[25] With the Vaibhāṣikas represented as admitting the *skandhas* to be *dravyasat*. The Sautrāntikas, in contrast, deny that the five *skandhas* exist as *dravyasat*, instead favoring the view that what is *dravyasat* are the 75 *dharmas* into which, inter alia, the *skandhas* can be reduced. Thus, for Sautrāntikas the category of *rūpa-skandha* exists only secondarily (*prajñaptisat*) insofar as it comprises the first 11 *dharmas* in the standard list of 75 (specifically, the five bodily senses, together with their respective objects, plus the category of *avijñaptirūpa*).

Viṃśatikā.[26] As with the latter work, there is some scholarly disagreement about whether Dignāga is best understood as arguing here for an idealist metaphysics, or simply for something like a representationalist epistemology involving sense-data (which allows the possibility of remaining neutral with respect to what might finally exist in the world).[27]

Be that as it may, what is of greatest interest to me here is Dignāga's clear allusion to the passage from Vasubandhu (considered above) on the "two truths." Thus, arguing that there is an unbridgeable gap between atoms as the putative *cause* of awareness and medium-sized dry goods as the *content* thereof, Dignāga says: "Things like jars are [merely] conventionally existent, *because if the atoms are removed, the awareness that appears with respect to them is destroyed* [k.5c-d]. In the case of what is substantially existent, such as color, even when one has taken away what is connected with it, there is no removal of the awareness of the color itself."[28] Like Vasubandhu, Dignāga thus suggests that what qualifies medium-sized dry goods (of which jars are a standard Indian example) as merely "conventionally existent" (*kun rdzob tu yod pa*, Skt. *saṃvṛtisat*) is the fact of their being reducible, while the constituent parts to which they

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[26] On Vasubandhu's arguments against atomism in the *Viṃśatikā*, see, inter alia, Kapstein 1988.

[27] Hayes (1988), for one, opts for the latter characterization (with respect both to Dignāga and to Vasubandhu), and calls the view "phenomenalism"; see pp.96-104 (on Vasubandhu) and pp.173-178 (on the *Ālambanaparīkṣā*). Of course, both Mīmāṃsakas and Candrakīrti would have problems even with this more modest claim, insofar as both may be said to espouse versions of "direct" or "naive realism" – the former perhaps as a matter of metaphysical principle, the latter simply in deference to what people conventionally say about their epistemic practices, and with the qualification that the intuitions of direct realism do not correspond to anything that is *ultimately* the case.

[28] As with Dignāga's other works, the *Ālambanaparīkṣā* survives only in its Tibetan translation. I have used the edition of Tola and Dragonetti (1982), which gives: *bum pa la sogs pa ni kun rdzob tu yod pa nyid do / "rdul phran yongs su bsal na ni / der snang shes pa nyams 'gyur phyir //" rdzas su yod pa rnams la ni 'brel pa can bsal du zin kyang kha dog la sogs pa bzhin du rang gi blo 'dor pa med do.* (The part italicized in the text represents *kārikā* 5c-d, which is here marked off with quotation marks. I will follow this convention in all subsequent citations from the *Pramāṇasamuccaya*, as well.) Note that Hayes (1988: 177) translates, "In the case of what is *rigorously real*..." (my emphasis) – which suggests that the text reads *paramārthasat*, for which Hayes has adopted the translation equivalent "rigorously real." But the text in fact reads *rdzas su yod*, which suggests instead *dravyasat* – though as I have been arguing, the two terms are, in the Ābhidharmika context which presently concerns us, conceptually co-extensive. For arguments similar to those of the *Ālambanaparīkṣā*, cf., *Pramāṇasamuccaya* 1.14 and *vṛtti* thereon (Hattori 1968: 33-34 [Hattori's translation], 189-191 [Tibetan text]).

can be reduced (such as "color," *kha dog*, which is shorthand for *rūpa* and the other *skandhas*) in turn exist "substantially" (*rdzas su*, Skt. *dravyataḥ*). In the *Pramāṇasamuccaya*, Dignāga alludes to the same discussion, this time explicitly putting the issue in terms of what is "ultimately existent" (*paramārthasat*). Thus, arguing that a cognition cannot properly be named after the object that produces it, Dignāga says: "These individual [atoms], when aggregated, are the cause [of cognition], but it is not the *aggregate* [itself that is causally efficacious], since this exists only conventionally.... *if [a cognition be produced] from an object, that [object] must be [a real entity, and what is real is] ultimately unnamable....*"[29]

Clearly, then, Dignāga's understanding of the reductionist project (and correspondingly, his understanding of the "two truths" as consisting in the enumerable sets of those existents that are reducible and those that are not) is substantially the same as Vasubandhu's, and we can safely say that Dignāga's notion of *svalakṣaṇa* thus represents one of several significantly correlated terms: *svabhāva, svalakṣaṇa, dharma, dravyasat, paramārthasat*. That is, Dignāga's notion of *svalakṣaṇa* represents the culmination of the Ābhidharmika intuition that there exist basic (*dravyasat*) and irreducible entities – ontological primitives which are the sole remainder of critical analysis, and which are defined by having *svalakṣaṇas*; and that the "ultimately real" or "ultimately true" (*paramārthasat*) consists in an enumerable set of such things.[30] The

[29] *Pramāṇasamuccayavṛtti ad* 1.15: *de dag bsags pa na yang so so ba rgyu yin gyi de bsags pa ni ma yin te tha snyad du yod pa'i phyir ro.... "gang las de ni don dam par / de la tha snyad du ma byas /"* [1.15c-d]. The Tibetan (per the translation of Kanakavarman) is at Hattori 1968: 189, with Hattori's translation at pp.34-5. I have followed Hattori's translation particularly of the *kārikā*, retaining his insertions; cf., Hattori's nn.2.24-25 (p.120) for an elaboration, together with relevant Sanskrit fragments.

[30] In this regard, the thumb-nail doxographical sketch provided by dKon-mchog 'jigs-med dbang-po is again interesting, and quite accurately states what I have here taken to be the most significant aspect of this approach: "A phenomenon that is established as bearing critical analysis with regard to its own way of being, independent of the imputation of terms or conceptions: that is the definition of ultimate truth. 'Existent,' 'ultimate truth,' '*svalakṣaṇa*,' 'impermanent,' 'constructed,' and 'truly established' are synonyms." (Mimaki 1977: 84: *sgra daṅ rtog pas btags pa la ma ltos par raṅ gi sdod lugs kyi ṅos nas rigs pas dpyad bzod du grub pa'i chos de don dam bden pa'i mtshan ñid / dṅos po daṅ / don dam bden pa daṅ / raṅ mtshan daṅ / mi rtag pa daṅ / 'dus byas daṅ / bden grub rnams don gcig/*)

same point is particularly clearly put by Dharmakīrti, who thus elaborates Dignāga's ideas vis-à-vis the category of pragmatic efficacy (*arthakriyā*): "Whatever has the capacity for pragmatic efficacy is said in this context to be ultimately true; everything else is conventionally true. These two [sets consist, respectively, in] unique particulars (*svalakṣaṇa*) and abstractions (*sāmānyalakṣaṇa*)."[31]

In what sense, though, does Dignāga's understanding of *svalakṣaṇa* represent, as I have put it, the "culmination" of Ābhidharmika intuitions? That is, just what are the *svalakṣaṇas* which, for Dignāga, thus constitute the set of really existent things? It seems to me that it is in his conception of this notion that Dignāga perhaps most significantly parts company from Vasubandhu.[32] I have indicated that a salient point about the Ābhidharmika usage of *svalakṣaṇa* is that it denotes some *property* – specifically, the "defining characteristics" of which *dharmas* are the "bearers." Indeed, Vasubandhu's etymology of the word *dharma* (*svalakṣaṇadhāraṇād dharma*, "it is a 'bearer' because of 'bearing' a defining characteristic") turns on precisely this notion. I have also suggested that the *svalakṣaṇas* ("defining characteristics") thus "borne" by *dharmas* are abstract or universal, in that *any instance* of some *dharma* qualifies as such by virtue of its sharing with *every other* instance of that *dharma* the property which defines it as belonging in a

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[31] *Pramāṇavārttika* 2.3 (Miyasaka 1971/72: 42): *arthakriyāsamartham yat tad atra paramārthasat / anyat saṃvṛtisat proktaṃ te svasāmānyalakṣaṇe //.* Manorathanandin (Pandeya 1989: 64) glosses Dharmakīrti's *atra* ("in this context") as *vastuvicāre* ("with respect to critical analysis of things"), and continues in such a way as to make clear that this project aims particularly at getting *behind* conventional discourse (*vyavahāra*) to something more real: *evaṃ yad asadṛśaṃ śabdāviṣayo 'nyanimittabhāve jñānābhāvaś ca tat paramārthasat. Ato 'nyad aśaktaṃ sadṛśaṃ śabdaviṣayaḥ, anyanimittabhāve buddher viṣayaś ca tat saṃvṛtisat proktam, kalpanāmātravyavahāryatvāt* ("Thus, the ultimately real is that which is unique, not an object of language, absence of awareness with respect to what exists as the cause of something else. What is other than this, without capacity, similar [to other things], and the object of an idea with respect to what exists as the cause of something else– that is said to be conventionally real, *owing to its being customary as mere imagining*"). It is important to note that the notion of "pragmatic efficacy" (*arthakriyā*) as the criterion of the ultimately real is among Dharmakīrti's innovations.

[32] Katsura (1991: 136) agrees, saying with respect to *svalakṣaṇas* that "Dignāga accepted the Abhidharmika's concepts of them at least in general. Nonetheless, he appears to have attached to them new significances." In characterizing this as Dignāga's most significant departure, I am only speaking, of course, in terms of the issues relevant to the present discussion. A more comprehensive account of Dignāga's innovations would of course have to assess the significance of his *apoha* doctrine, and of his formulation of rules for valid inferences.

final ontology.[33] In sharp contrast, Dharmakīrti understands *svalakṣaṇas* as *unique, objective particulars* of some sort – specifically, as the kind of vanishingly small bare particulars that fit with Dharmakīrti's metaphysics of "momentariness" (*kṣaṇikatva*). Thus, for example, John Dunne has urged that, on Dharmakīrti's understanding, it must be the case that *svalakṣaṇas* have no spatial extension.[34] In Dharmakīrti's thought, at least, the Ābhidharmika tradition thus reaches its culmination in the insight that the irreducible ontological primitives in the system cannot be said themselves to *have* any properties; for if they did, they would be reducible (i.e., into *dharma* and *dharmin*, "property" and "property-possessor"). Thus, it is no longer the case that *svalakṣaṇas* are the "defining characteristics" *possessed by dharmas*; rather, *svalakṣaṇas just are* the ontological primitives on this view, and they are simply "self-characterizing." Dunne (1995: 195) nicely expresses the upshot: "This is best illustrated by a genitive construction such as, 'The nature of the infinitesimal particle [*svalakṣaṇa*].' Dharmakīrti maintains that in such expressions the *dharma* is actually identical to the *dharmin* itself. The apparent separation of the *dharma* from the *dharmin* is simply part of the exclusion process, and is hence conceptual."

Recall, however, that there is some question whether Dharmakīrti represents a useful guide to the interpretation of Dignāga. Richard Hayes is among the scholars who have recently challenged the idea that Dignāga understood *svalakṣaṇas* in the way that Dharmakīrti thus understood them. The persistent view that he did is attributable, Hayes suggests, to the influence of Stcherbatsky, who, reading Dignāga through the lens of Dharmakīrti, first "imputed" to Dignāga "the view of particulars as point-instances,

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[33] Again, cf., Katsura (1991: 137): "...it is clear that *svalakṣaṇas* of Abhidharma, viz. *dharmas* which are actually named as *rūpa*, *vedanā*, etc., should be regarded by Dignāga not as *svalakṣaṇas* but as *sāmānyalakṣaṇas*. Consequently, Dignāga's *sāmānyalakṣaṇa* corresponds to both *sva-* and *sāmānyalakṣaṇa* of the Abhidharma, which cannot be regarded as real in Dignāga's system."

[34] Cf., Dunne 1999: 131.

which amounts to a commitment to a doctrine of radical momentariness (*kṣaṇikavāda*)."[35] It seems to me, however, that it is not altogether clear precisely what Dignāga means by *svalakṣaṇa*, which he never formally defines. Indeed, about the only thing Dignāga says about *svalakṣaṇas* is that they are "indefinable" or "unspecifiable" (*avyapadeśya*; "ineffable" is a frequently met translation for this). Thus, Dignāga begins his *Pramāṇasamuccaya* by arguing:

> *Perception and inference are reliable warrants*. There are only two, since *there are [only] two [kinds of] warrantable objects*; there is nothing warrantable other than *svalakṣaṇas* and abstractions. It is perception that has *svalakṣaṇas* as its objects, and inference that has abstractions as its objects.[36]

As for the "sphere of operation" (*gocara*) of the perceptual senses (*indriya*): it is the "indefinable form which is to be known in itself."[37] Later on, in contesting the Naiyāyika account of perception (which has it that perceptual awareness is "ineffable"),[38] Dignāga urges that this qualification is unnecessary, because redundant: "It is not possible that a definable object be the object of a sense-cognition (*dbang po'i blo*, =Skt. *indriyabuddhi*), since what is definable is [always] the object of inference. [Therefore,] there is no [possibility of a sense-cognition's] variance in regard to indefinability."[39]

Just what does it mean, though, for *svalakṣaṇas* thus to be "indefinable"? Here again, Dignāga's own account is frustratingly underdetermined. It seems clear, though,

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[35] Hayes 1988: 15. Cf., Katsura (1991: 144): "[Dharmakīrti's view of] reality is characterized by momentariness, an idea which has no place in Dignāga."

[36] *Pramāṇasamuccayavṛtti ad* 1.2: *"mngon sum dang ni rjes su dpag / tshad ma dag ni" gnyis kho na ste, gang gi phyir "mtshan nyid gnyis / gzhal bya" rang dang spyi'i mtshan nyid dag las gzhan pa'i gzhal bar bya ba med do. rang gi mtshan nyid kyi yul can ni mngon sum yin la spyi' mtshan nyid kyi yul can ni rjes su dpag pa'o* .... Tibetan text per Hattori 1968: 177.

[37] *Pramāṇasamuccaya* 1.5c-d: *svasaṃvedyam anirdeśyaṃ rūpam indriyagocaraḥ* (Sanskrit fragment in Hattori 1968: 91, n.1.43, which also provides some useful elaboration; among other things, Hattori reports an alternative reading from another source: *svalakṣaṇam anirdeśyam*....).

[38] Cf., *Nyāyasūtra* 1.1.4, given at Hattori 1968: 121, n.3.1.

[39] *Pramāṇasamuccayavṛtti ad* 1.17: *dbang po'i blo la bstan par bya ba'i yul nyid srid pa ma yin te, bstan par bya ba ni rjes su dpag pa'i yul yin pa'i phyir yo. bstan par bya ba ma yin pa nyid la yang 'khrul ba yod pa ma yin te*.... (Tibetan text per Hattori 1968: 191) Cf., also, *Pramāṇasamuccya* 2.2a: *rang gi mtshan nyid bstan bya min* ("the *svalakṣaṇa* is indefinable"). Candrakīrti will pick up this approach when he attributes to his interlocutor an appeal to *avācyatā* ("ineffability"); cf., Appendix II, nn.30-31.

that this idea probably has something to do with Dignāga's taking them to be the *objects* (Tib., *yul*; Skt., *viṣaya*) of perception – and, in turn, with his characteristic insistence on the fact that perception (*pratyakṣa*) is definitively characterized by its being "free of conceptual elaboration" (*kalpanāpoḍha*). Apropos of this, Dignāga says: "*Perception is free from conceptual elaboration*; that awareness which is without conceptual elaboration is perception. And what is this which is called 'conceptual elaboration'? *Association with name, genus, etc.*"[40] The basic idea here is that a bare perceptual event is constitutively non-linguistic, with the subsequent addition of linguistic interpretation representing, among other things, the point at which cognitive error can creep in. To be sure, it is not *necessarily* the case that any subsequent linguistic elaboration introduces error, as some such is necessary merely to yield the kind of propositional knowledge which alone could make the initial perception useful. Thus, for example, Dignāga explains the steps of the cognitive process by saying: "One [initially] apprehends the non-conventional *svalakṣaṇas* (*rang ... mtshan nyid dag tha snyad du bya ba ma yin*; Skt., **avyavahārtavyasvalakṣaṇāni*) and the abstraction 'being colored.' Then, by means of the operation of the mind, one relates [being colored] to [the universal] impermanence, and expresses [the resulting cognition in the judgment] 'colored things and so forth are impermanent.'"[41]

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[40] *Pramāṇasamuccaya* 1.3, with *vṛtti*: *"mngon sum rtog pa dang bral ba." shes pa gang la rtog pa med pa de ni mngon sum mo. rtog pa shes bya ba 'di ji lta bu shig ce na, "ming dang rigs sogs bsres pa'o."* Apropos of this characterization of *pratyakṣa* as definitively non-conceptual, Dignāga cites (in his *vṛtti* to *Pramāṇasamuccaya* 1.4; cf., Hattori 1968: 26, 179) a well-known passage to be found, inter alia, in Yaśomitra's *Abhidharmakośavyākhyā*: "A man endowed [only] with visual awareness perceives blue, but [he does] not [perceive] 'it is blue'" (*cakṣurvijñānasamaṅgi nilaṃ jānāti no tu nilam iti*). This passage is clearly meant to draw a distinction between non-propositional sensations (such as a bare sensation of blue), and the propositional, "contentful" knowledge that is based on these (as reflected in the propositional statement, "That's blue"). The point in characterizing *pratyakṣa* as constitutively non-conceptual, then, is to urge that it yields awareness *with no propositional content*. Dignāga's appeal to this passage thus represents a particularly useful point at which to see his project as presupposing what Wilfrid Sellars called the "myth of the given"; cf., nn.44, 67, 86-89, below. Dignāga's quotation of this scripture (*āgama*) is among the parts of his argument reproduced and addressed by Candrakirti; cf., Appendix II, nn.79, 82.

[41] *Pramāṇasamuccayavṛtti ad* 1.2c-d (Hattori 1968: 177): *rang dang spyi'i mtshan nyid dag tha snyad du bya ba ma yin pa dang kha dog nyid dag las kha dog la sogs pa bzung nas, kha dog la sogs pa mi rtag go shes mi rtag pa nyid la sogs par yid kyis rab tu sbyor bar byed do.* Here, I have basically followed Hattori's translation (p.24), with some adjustments; cf., Hattori's n.1.19, p.81, for extensive Sanskrit fragments from commentaries on Dharmakirti. In these, *avyapadeśya* is again the word used to

While discursive elaboration in terms of universals is thus held to be indispensable to the development of propositional knowledge, it is nevertheless the case that a part of Buddhism's "deep grammar," as it were, is the idea that our cognitive and soteriological defilements are adventitious to our basic epistemic faculties, such that the removal of these defilements would leave untrammeled perception free to register things as they really are. If discursive elaboration of our basic percepts is thus necessary to yield propositional knowledge, then, it is nevertheless the case that such, in one form or another, is also precisely the problem to be overcome by Buddhist practice. That intuitions such as these are in play is made more clear by Dharmakīrti, who revises Dignāga's account by adding that perception is not only "free of conceptual elaboration," but also "non-mistaken."[42] In this way, "conceptual elaboration" (*kalpanā*) is specifically implicated as the point in the cognitive process at which error comes in. Moreover, Dharmakīrti also expands Dignāga's contention that conceptualization involves "association with name, genus, etc.," with the significant adjustment that conceptualization involves simply any idea that is *suitable* for association with discourse.[43] With this emphasis, Dharmakīrti means to allow that conceptual activity is the sort of thing which may be (and is in fact) found even in such pre- and non-linguistic

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characterize *svalakṣaṇas*. For the Sanskrit underlying the Tibetan translation of Dignāg's *tha snyad du bya ba ma yin*, I have taken *avyavahārtavya* from Chandra (1959-1961: 1010). Interestingly, Chandra's usage is from the *Nyāyabindu* of Dharmakīrti. Particularly in light of what we will see in Chapters 4 and 5 to be Candrakīrti's characteristic concern with what is *conventional* (i.e., with *lokavyavahāra*), the equivalence here between *svalakṣaṇas* as *avyapadeśya* and as *avyavahārtavya* is telling, and implicitly reiterates the idea that *svalakṣaṇas*, so qualified, count as *paramārthasat*.

[42] *Nyāyabindu* 1.4 (Shastri 1985: 20): *tatra pratyakṣaṃ kalpanāpoḍham abhrāntam*; cf., *Pramāṇavārttika* 2.123, ff. (Miyasaka 1971/72: 56, ff.). While the introduction of this as a definitive feature perhaps represents an innovation by Dharmakīrti, cf., *Pramāṇasamuccayavṛtti ad* 1.17: Having said that the Nyāya definition of perception involves a redundant reference to *avyapadeśyatva* (cf., n.38, above), Dignāga adds: "Nor is there a possibility of [perception's] having an erroneous object, since an erroneous cognition has as its object an illusion produced by the mind" (Tibetan at Hattori 1968: 193: *'khrul ba'i yul nyid kyang srid pa ma yin te, 'khrul ba ni yid kyi 'khrul ba'i yul nyid yin pa'i phyir ro*; cf., Hattori's n.3.7, p.122).

[43] *Nyāyabindu* 1.5 (Shastri 1985: 25): *abhilāpasaṃsargayogyapratibhāsapratītiḥ kalpanā* ("*Kalpanā* is a conception which has an appearance suitable for association with discourse").

creatures as infants and animals – which must be the case if one is to avoid the unwanted consequence that the main soteriological defilement does not exist for infants or animals.

Clearly, the idea of the "indefinability" of unique particulars can serve important intuitions about the constitutively non-linguistic character of perception – intuitions according to which perception is thought to yield access to uniquely *uninterpreted* data, which, being "knowable in themselves" (*svasaṃvedyam*), amount to something that is simply "given" to awareness as the uniquely certain foundation for all other knowledge. Such has been the contention of Tom Tillemans, who aptly appeals to Wilfred Sellars's characterization of the "myth of the given":

> One of the forms taken by the Myth of the Given is the idea that there is, indeed *must be*, a structure of particular matter of fact such that (a) each fact can not only be noninferentially known to be the case, but presupposes no other knowledge either of particular matter of fact, or general truths; and (b) such that the noninferential knowledge of facts belonging to this structure constitutes the ultimate court of appeals for all factual claims – particular and general – about the world. (Sellars 1963: 164)

Following this lead, Tillemans explains that *svalakṣaṇas*, for epistemologists in the tradition of Dignāga, represent "the *purely particular*, known without prior reliance on concepts or any general truths," such that "particulars (*svalakṣaṇas*), be they accepted as external or as only mental, are the sort of thing *naturally suited to be present to non-inferential awareness*, and hence can be considered as a type of given – this is what is involved in Buddhists saying that particulars are *the* exclusive objects of perception."[44] It is, I suggest, chiefly this idea that makes it apt to characterize the epistemology of Dignāga and Dharmakīrti as a species of *foundationalism*, with J. L. Austin's characterization of such working almost as well for Dignāga as it does for Austin's target (A. J. Ayer): Knowledge, on such a view,

[44] Tillemans 2000: 4. See also Tillemans 1990: 41, ff.; and n.40, above.

> is a structure the upper tiers of which are reached by inferences, and the foundations are the *data* on which these inferences are based.... Thus – so the doctrine runs – the way to identify the upper tiers of the structure of knowledge is to ask whether one might be mistaken, whether there is something that one *can doubt*; if the answer is Yes, then one is not at the basement. And conversely, it will be characteristic of the *data* that in their case no doubt is possible, no mistake can be made. So to find the data, the foundations, look for *the incorrigible.*[45]

I will have more to say about what Dignāga may have been after (and about whether, in particular, he can be said to have been after incorrigible "certainty") in concluding this chapter. For now, though, I would like to consider briefly the possibility that Dignāga's characterization of *svalakṣaṇas* as "indefinable" is meant to advance a stronger claim – one such that Dignāga's version of *svalakṣaṇas* might resemble Dharmakīrti's, after all. In this connection, it is interesting to start by noting Masaaki Hattori's translation of part of *Pramāṇasamuccaya* 1.2 (*tshad ma dag ni gnyis kho na ste, gang gi phyir mtshan nyid gnyis / gzhal bya*).[46] Hattori gives: "They are only two, *because the object to be cognized has [only] two aspects*," reading (with my emphasis) as though *mtshan nyid gnyis* (**lakṣaṇadvayam*) were a *bahuvrihi* compound standing for *gzhal bya* (**prameya*).[47] Against such a reading, Shoryu Katsura makes what seems to me exactly the right point about Hattori's translation: viz., that it "may suggest that the object to be cognized is a possessor of the two *lakṣaṇas* and [is] something different from them.... [But] I do not think that Dignāga admitted any bearer of the two *lakṣaṇas*."[48] One reason I am inclined to opt for Katsura's more straightforward reading (according to

[45] Austin 1962: 105. Austin's excellent little book is chiefly framed as a consideration of the sense-datum theory of A. J. Ayer (1940). Austin aptly characterizes Ayer's approach as exploiting a peculiarly technical use of the word "perceive," and rightly sees this as based on the "wish to produce a species of statement that will be *incorrigible*; and the real virtue of this invented sense of 'perceive' is that, since what is perceived in this sense [i.e., introspectable "sense-data"] *has* to exist and *has* to be as it appears, in saying what I perceive in this sense I *can't be wrong*." (Austin 1962: 103; for Ayer's response to Austin, see Ayer 1969) For more on the idea that claims to knowledge are only justified when one *can't be wrong*, see also Austin's "Other Minds" (reprinted in Austin 1979), especially pp. 79, 97ff. On this conception of "knowing," of course, the "problem of other minds" becomes particularly intractable.

[46] Cf., n.36, above. Hattori's translation (1968) is at p.24.

[47] Cf., the Sanskrit reconstruction given by Katsura (1991: 136, n.29): ... *pratyakṣam anumānaṃ ca pramāṇe dve eva, yasmād lakṣaṇadvayaṃ prameyaṃ.*

[48] *Ibid.*

which the compound is not a *bahuvrihi*, and *prameyam* is more literally gerundive) is that, as we will see, *Candrakirti has seized on precisely the same conceptual issue that Katsura here notes*. Thus, on Candrakirti's reading, too, Dignāga did not wish to admit any separate "bearer" (*dharma*!) of his *svalakṣaṇas*, which is precisely why Candrakirti can (as he does) urge that Dignāga must think of *svalakṣaṇas* as simply "self-characterizing" – against which view, Candrakirti will exploit standard grammatical analyses of the "characterizing" relationship as necessarily involving both a *characteristic* (*lakṣaṇa*) and a *thing characterized* (*lakṣya*).[49]

Clearly, then, Candrakirti (like Katsura) read Dignāga as wanting to affirm that *svalakṣaṇas* do not themselves *have* any characteristics (and that they are not, in turn, the characteristics *of* anything else) – which is precisely why Candrakirti can (as he does) take it as an unwanted consequence for Dignāga that *svalakṣaṇas* must be the characteristics *of* something else. With this interpretation of Dignāga in mind, we might put the difference between the Ābhidharmika usage of *svalakṣaṇa* (which is what Candrakirti favors) and Dignāga's Sanskritically, in terms of two different analyses of the compound *sva-lakṣaṇa*: on the Ābhidharmika usage, the compound is a *karmadhāraya*, such that a *svalakṣaṇa* denotes simply whatever "property" or "characteristic" (*lakṣaṇa*) is definitively "proper" or "specific" (*sva-*) to something (i.e., something's "*own* characteristic"); Dignāga, on the other hand, can be said to read the compound as a *bahuvrihi*, such that *svalakṣaṇa* denotes what "has *itself* (*sva*) as (its only) characteristic." But recall Dunne's characterization of Dharmakirti's notion of *svalakṣaṇa*: the irreducibility of *svalakṣaṇas* "is best illustrated by a genitive construction such as, 'The

[49] Thus, Candrakirti will launch his critique of Dignāga's category of *svalakṣaṇa* by asking: *Kiṃ ca yadi svasāmānyalakṣaṇadvayānurodhena pramāṇadvayam uktaṃ, yasya tallakṣaṇadvayaṃ kiṃ tallakṣyam asti? Atha nāsti? Yady asti, tadā tadaparaṃ prameyam astiti, kathaṃ pramāṇadvayaṃ?* ("And if you say there are [only] two reliable warrants, corresponding respectively to the two [kinds of warrantable objects, i.e.,] bare particulars and abstractions, [then we are entitled to ask,] does the subject (*lakṣya*) which has these two characteristics exist? Or does it not exist? If it exists, then there is an additional warrantable object; how, then, are there [only] two reliable warrants?") Cf., Appendix, n.14.

nature of the infinitesimal particle.' Dharmakīrti maintains that in such expressions the *dharma* is actually identical to the *dharmin* itself. The apparent separation of the *dharma* from the *dharmin* is simply part of the exclusion process, and is hence conceptual." If Candrakīrti and Katsura are right, it seems to me that Dignāga is after much the same idea: in order to be consistent, the Ābhidharmika version of Buddhist reductionism cannot come to rest with the idea of *dharmas*, if such are thought to "have" some defining characteristic; rather, it must be pressed to the point where the only ontological primitives in the system are not even *analytically* resolvable even into "properties" and "property-possessors." *Svalakṣaṇas*, on such a view, thus become not only unique, objective particulars, but *bare* particulars.[50]

If this is right, it might tell us something about what Dignāga meant in characterizing *svalakṣaṇas* as "indefinable." That is, perhaps Dignāga's point is that *svalakṣaṇas* cannot be "defined" or "specified" (*vyapadeśyate*) specifically *as having any properties*; rather, the only irreducible *svalakṣaṇas* worth the name must be "indefinable" in that they admit of no logical reduction into *dharma* and *dharmin*, "property" and "property-possessor."[51] It is no longer the case, that is, that *svalakṣaṇas* are the "defining characteristics" *possessed by dharmas*; rather, *svalakṣaṇas just are* the ontological primitives on this view, and they are simply *self*-characterizing. The upshot of Katsura's apt point regarding Hattori's translation is thus to emphasize that, on Dignāga's view, *svalakṣaṇas* are no longer "borne" by anything; they are simply themselves the *direct*

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[50] Such, I will argue, is at any rate the problem that Candrakīrti sees with Dignāga's account; cf., Chapter 4, n.67.

[51] Cf., Dignāga's recurrent point that the distinguishing of separate *viśeṣa* and *viśeṣya* ("characteristic" and "thing characterized") is a constitutively *conceptual* operation – in which case, perception can never itself register such a distinction. Thus, e.g., *Pramāṇasamuccaya* 1.23, where Dignāga adduces the case of perception's registering such a distinction as a counterfactual entailing problematic consequences: "If it were admitted that both [*viśeṣaṇa* and *viśeṣya*] were objects of the same [sense,] unaccepted consequences would follow" (Tibetan at Hattori 1968: 207: *yul mtshungs nyid du 'dod ce na / mi 'dod pa yang thal bar 'gyur //*). For more on this, cf., n.60, below.

objects of perception, and that only insofar as perception is uniquely devoid of the sort of conceptual activity that is concerned with discerning distinguishing properties.

This stronger claim about what it takes for something to qualify as irreducible seems to me to cut against the interpretation of Dignāga's *svalakṣaṇas* put forward by Jonardon Ganeri, according to whose trope-theoretical reconstruction, Dignāga's *svalakṣaṇa* denotes simply *any* "object" of perception, including the garden-variety macro-objects we typically take ourselves to perceive. On Ganeri's reading, then, the "indefinability" (*avyapadeśyatva*) of these consists simply in their being unavailable to any *comprehensive* intuition. As Ganeri says,

> Properties are conceptual constructs. They are potential contents of conception because it is possible, in principle, to know everything about them.... Objects, on the other hand, are not potential constructs of conception because it is not possible, even in principle, to know everything about them. Again, on the trope-theoretic analysis, what this means is that one cannot know every member of a class of concurrent tropes – all the trope-constitutents of this vase, for example.[52]

On this reading, the point is that "objects" (*svalakṣaṇas*) are indefinable *simply as given to perceptual awareness*, and that insofar as perceptual awareness can never comprehensively comprehend all facets of an object.

Note, though, that Ganeri's interpretation seems to be licensed by a reading particularly of Hattori's translation of Dignāga – and specifically, of *Pramāṇasamuccaya* 1.5a-b, which Hattori renders: "a thing possessing many properties cannot be cognized *in all its aspects* by the sense."[53] Richard Hayes (1988, p.138; my emphasis) instead translates: "*no knowledge at all* of a possessor of properties that has many characteristics is derived from a sense faculty." Explaining the difference from Hattori, he ventures an interesting and cogent point:

[52] Ganeri 2001: 106.

[53] Hattori 1968: 27; my emphasis. Ganeri (2001: 101) apparently follows Hattori, modifying slightly: "A thing possessing many forms (*rūpa*) cannot be cognised in all its aspects by a sense-faculty." Kanakavarman's Tibetan is at Hattori 1968: 181: *du ma'i ngo bo'i chos can ni / dbang po las rtogs srid ma yin*. Hattori (1968: 91, n.1.43) gives the Sanskrit as quoted by Prajñākaragupta: *dharmiṇo 'nekarūpasya nendriyāt sarvathā gatiḥ*. Cf., n.37, above, for *Pramāṇasamuccaya* 1.5c-d.

> Please note that the Tibetan translation construes the modifier 'sarvathā' as governing the negative 'na' and so renders the core of the sentence modally: 'rtogs srid ma yin' or 'knowledge is impossible.' The point is that knowledge of a multi-propertied whole is impossible through the senses. Hattori's translation ... implies [the] weaker claim ... that while sensation can capture some of the aspects of a multi-propertied whole, it cannot know the whole exhaustively. But I think the point is clearly that the whole cannot be known at all by the senses, because the notion of a whole is superimposed upon a multiplicity of discrete data of sense.[54]

Thus, while Hayes is (as I have noted) critical of those who follow Stcherbatsky in seeing Dignāga's *svalakṣaṇas* as the "point-instants" of Dharmakirti, he nevertheless reads Dignāga's point about the "indefinability" of *svalakṣaṇas* as a strong claim that they are radically different from what is present to propositional awareness; and, in keeping with his emphasis on Dignāga's as a "phenomenalist" epistemology,[55] he nevertheless reads Dignāga's *svalakṣaṇas* not as (macro-) objects themselves, but as the component sense-data out of which such are constructed: "... individuals, which are the referents of singular terms, are regarded by Diṅnāga to be the synthesis of a multiplicity of cognitions and hence are treated as classes rather than as particulars."[56]

Hayes's point seems to me to be generally correct, and not obviously incompatible with the kind of reading one might develop following Dharmakirti. As I indicated in beginning this survey, though, it is hard to be sure precisely what Dignāga means by his use of the term *svalakṣaṇa*, since he says so little explicitly about it, and that in texts that come down to us mainly in divergent Tibetan translations. What is nonetheless clear, in any event, is that Dignāga has transformed the Ābhidharmika sense of the word. According to the latter, *svalakṣaṇas* are the uniquely defining "properties" or "characteristics" borne by *dharmas*, with Vasubandhu having invoked the latter's "bearing" (√*dhṛ*) of these to explain their name (*dharma*, "bearer"). Clearly, on the

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[54] Hayes 1988: 170, n.20.

[55] Cf., n.27, above.

[56] Hayes 1988: 189.

spartan epistemology espoused by Dignāga, the kind of "defining characteristics" thus posited by Vasubandhu would not be the sort of thing that could be encountered in perception, and would, as Shoryu Katsura has noted, instead have to be counted as among the things Dignāga considers to be "abstractions" (*sāmānyalakṣaṇas*).[57] On Dignāga's usage, in contrast, *svalakṣaṇas* are the *unique particulars* encountered by perception, and are "characterized" only by their "indefinability" (*avyapadeśyatva*) – which is, perhaps, simply to emphasize the irreducible uniqueness of particulars, as opposed to the eminently *categoreal* notion at play in the idea of *dharmas*. Whether or not we understand the latter point as intended to delimit the kinds of vanishingly small "point-instants" that Dharmakirti will have in mind, it is clear that this characterization advances the intuition that our epistemic faculties yield some sort of access to a simply *given*, uninterpreted sort of data.

That the latter point does significant conceptual work for this view is particularly clear when we recall that Dignāga's *svalakṣaṇas* are also thought to constitute the set of entities which define the "ultimately true" or "really existent" (*paramārthasat*). Thus, for Dignāga as for Vasubandhu, the "ultimately true" consists in an enumerable set of existents – specifically, in the set of things that are the irreducible remainder of critical analysis. Despite the ambiguities in Dignāga's presentation, then, we can safely conclude by noting two salient points regarding *svalakṣaṇas*: first, they are no longer the abstractions that are "defining characteristics," but are uniquely the *direct objects* of perception – a fact Candrakirti will emphasize by characterizing Dignāga's usage as *karmasādhanam*, "denoting an object"[58]; second (as I will argue), this will chiefly be a problem for Candrakirti insofar as these objects (however they be understood) are

[57] Cf., n.33, above.

[58] Cf., Chapter 4, n.64. Cf., also, Katsura (1991: 137-8): "I would like to assume that in Diṅnāga's system *svalakṣaṇa* is the object itself which is to be grasped directly by perception, which is neither expressible nor identifiable at that moment...."

thought to represent something "ultimately real" (*paramārthasat*) to which our epistemic faculties provide access.

It seems to me that we can thus conclude our account of *svalakṣaṇa* by again noting Dharmakīrti's take on the subject: "Whatever has the capacity for pragmatic efficacy is said in this context to be ultimately true; everything else is conventionally true. These two [sets consist, respectively, in] unique particulars (*svalakṣaṇa*) and abstractions (*sāmānyalakṣa*)."[59] While Dharmakīrti may be said to differ from Dignāga in thus introducing the notion of "pragmatic efficacy" as the criterion of the real, and while Dharmakīrti may have a different understanding of *svalakṣaṇa* in mind, this statement nevertheless captures the crucial Ābhidharmika intuition that, from Candrakīrti's perspective, reaches its culmination in the thought of *both* of these thinkers: "ultimate truth" consists in the enumerable set of existents (viz., for them, *svalakṣaṇas*) that are the irreducible remainder of critical analysis, with the possible differences between Dignāga and Dharmakīrti perhaps having chiefly to do simply with what it looks like to press the notion of "irreducibility" to its limit. Thus, whether the irreducible remainder consists in the vanishingly small "point-instants" of *kṣaṇikavāda*, or simply in unique particulars that defy our attempts at comprehensive knowledge, both Dignāga and Dharmakīrti posit *something* as irreducibly existent. In Dignāga's hands, then, *svalakṣaṇa* no longer denotes (as it does in the Ābhidharmika context) a "defining characteristic," but something like "unique particular" – with there being some basis, moreover, for thinking that Candrakīrti rightly sees that Dignāga particularly has in mind the idea of *bare* particulars.

[59] Cf., n.31, above.

2.iii. Dignāga on perception: Non-conceptual awareness and the problem of "ascertainment"

Let us now turn to Dignāga's account of perception (*pratyakṣa*), the most important feature of which we have already had occasion to note. Specifically, in attempting to understand Dignāga's claims regarding the "indefinability" of unique particulars, we saw that such a notion is easily read as going hand-in-hand with the idea of perception as definitively "free of conceptual elaboration" (*kalpanāpoḍha*). Emphasis on the latter is, in turn, Dignāga's most prominently recurrent concern in the first chapter of the *Pramāṇasamuccaya*. While Dignāga says little explicitly about *svalakṣaṇas*, there can be no doubt about his understanding of perception; for having initially defined perception as "free of conceptual elaboration," the rest of Dignāga's treatment of the subject consists in a survey of rival definitions, the dismissal of which almost invariably turns on their allowing what Dignāga takes to be definitively conceptual activities to count as instances of perception.[60]

To be sure, this characterization of perception can plausibly be said to express what is a fairly wide-spread (though controversial) feeling that our sense faculties yield outputs that are largely neutral, with judgments about these outputs (e.g., that involved in seeing a percept *as* something in particular) thought to represent subsequent interpretation. There are important and cogent reasons, though, why both the Mīmāṃsakas and Candrakīrti will see this characterization as a tendentious one, and will be concerned to refute it. For Candrakīrti, as I have already suggested, the issue will

[60] Thus, for example, Dignāga faults the Sāṃkhya account of perception as one in which, counterfactually, "[the senses would,] like the mind, be endowed with conceptual construction regarding their object" (*Pramāṇasamuccaya* 1.26), explaining: "Because of their apprehending different individuals (*viśeṣa*) as possessing the characteristic (*viśeṣaṇa*) of [being in] the class that forms the peculiar object [of each sense], they [the senses] would be endowed with conceptual construction regarding their proper objects, as in the case of the mind's operation." (Tibetan at Hattori 1968: 215: *"don la yid bzhin rnam par rtog pa can /" rang gi don rigs kyi khyad par can de'i khyad par 'dzin pa'i phyir, rang gi yul la yid kyi 'jug pa bzhin du rnam par rtog pa can du 'gyur ro*). On the distinguishing of "individuals" (*viśeṣas*) and "qualifiers" or "characteristics" (*viśeṣaṇas*) as a definitively conceptual activity, cf., n.51, above.

particularly have to do with *svalakṣaṇas*, with the problematic claim being that, in putting us in touch with *svalakṣaṇas*, perception effectively yields access to something *ultimately existent* (*paramārthasat*). To put the point another way, this is the concern that perception is effectively posited as affording a peculiarly *privileged* sort of access to what exists. From Candrakīrti's perspective, then, perception's alleged "freedom from conceptual elaboration" (*kalpanāpoḍhatva*) is really just the flip-side of the putative "indefinability" (*avyapadeśyatva*) of unique particulars (*svalakṣaṇas*), and is therefore to be resisted chiefly insofar as the latter is thought to be problematic.[61] In other words, Dignāga's insistence on the definitively non-conceptual character of perception can be seen as serving his intuition that we have some basic epistemic faculty which, though adventitiously defiled, nonetheless affords access to something "ultimately true" – and Candrakīrti's refusal of this characterization will be meant to serve Candrakīrti's contrary intuition that "ultimate truth" is an abstract state of affairs, and therefore does not consist in a set of existents to which we have epistemic access. To the extent, then, that we have already developed some understanding of how Dignāga understands *svalakṣaṇas* (i.e., as constituting the set of ultimately real existents), we are already in a position to appreciate why Candrakīrti will resist the characterization of perception as non-conceptual.

With the Mīmāṃsaka critique of Buddhist epistemology in mind, however, we can note another of the salient difficulties with Dignāga's characterization of perception: while perceptual cognitions are posited by Dignāga as *foundational* for propositional awareness, there is a real question whether such emphatically non-conceptual cognitions can, in principle, ever be finally related to the eminently conceptual domain of propositional knowledge. This issue can be framed in terms of the category of *niścaya*, "certainty," "resolution," "judgment," etc. Dignāga repeatedly emphasizes, as we would

[61] Cf., Chapter 5, n.19, for Tom Tillemans's apt characterization of the motivation behind Candrakīrti's critique of this.

expect, that the achievement of *niścaya* is an eminently *conceptual* function, which therefore can never attach to instances of perception. Thus, for example, in countering the Nyāya definition of perception (which includes the characterization of such as "being essentially determinate," *vyavasāyātmaka*),[62] Dignāga explains: "'Determination' (*zhen pa;* Skt., *vyavasāya*) means 'ascertainment' (*nges pa;* Skt., *niścaya*). This cannot [attend a perceptual awareness], since it is not seen apart from imputation with respect to [macro-objects] such as cows, which [macro-objects] are characterized by abstractions, etc."[63] 'Ascertainment' is, in other words, a function of *kalpanā*, "conceptuality": "Awareness arising from the four [factors admitted by Nyāya as constituting a sensory cognition][64] is not the same as awareness arising from ascertainment, since ascertainment is a function of conceptualization (*gtan la phebs pa ni brtags pa sngon du 'gro ba can yin*), and since, [in contrast,] perception consists merely in disclosing an object."[65]

There is, then, a tension built into this account of perception: perceptual cognitions are held to provide the foundations for all subsequent 'certainty' (with inferences, for example, being necessarily derivative of perceptions); and yet, *perceptual cognitions themselves can never yield certainty*, which will always be the result of a subsequent judgment. Insofar as the whole idea of *pramāṇavāda* is an idea of delimiting reliable warrants as *useful for the achievement of human ends*,[66] bare perceptions thus end up being accredited as full-fledged *pramāṇas* only to the extent that they have been

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[62] Cf., n.38, above.

[63] Tibetan at Hattori 1968: 193: *zhen pa ni nges pa ste, de spyi la sogs pa dang ldan pa'i ba lang la sogs pa la ma brtags par ma mthong ba'i phyir mi srid do.*

[64] I.e. (per Hattori 1968: 42), soul (*ātma*), sense (*indriya*), mind (*manas*), and object (*viṣaya*).

[65] Tibetan at Hattori 1968: 199: *bzhi po phrad pa las skyes pa'i shes pa dang gtan la phebs pa las skyes pa'i shes pa mtshungs pa yang ma yin te, gtan la phebs pa ni brtags pa sngon du 'gro ba can yin pa'i phyir la, mngon sum ni yul lta ba tsam yin pa'i phyir ro.* For a similar point directed specifically against the standard Mīmāṃsaka account of perception (which is one according to which universals can be objects of perception), cf., Hattori 1968: 233 (Tibetan), 67 (Hattori's translation).

[66] Cf., e.g., the opening stanza of Dharmakīrti's *Nyāyabindhu*, which effectively glosses *pramāṇa* as *samyagjñāna* ("veridical awareness"), and says: "The achievement of all human ends depends on veridical awareness" (Shastri 1985: 4: *samyagjñānapūrvikā sarvapuruṣārthasiddhiḥ...*).

certified by a subsequent inference such as can express the perceptual output as useful "knowledge." As Tom Tillemans puts it, "perception alone is insufficient: other conceptual thought processes are psychologically needed to arrive at propositional knowledge upon which we can profitably act."[67] Addressing this situation, some of the commentators on Dharmakīrti resort to talk of "ascertainment that is obtained subsequent to perception" (*pratyakṣapṛṣṭhalabdhaniścaya*).[68] According to this idea, the second-order *ascertainment* of a first-order perception is, it turns out, confirmed by an inference – specifically, an inference from the subsequently observed fact of pragmatic efficacy. As John Dunne explains in elaborating the commentator Devendrabuddhi's account of this process, "Devendrabuddhi does not wish to claim that [the initial] perception cannot be a *pramāṇa*.... [Rather, he must conclude that] that initial perception was a *pramāṇa*; one was simply unable to determine the [*prāmāṇya*] of that perception at the time of the perception."[69]

Tellingly, Dignāga had already referred (well before the time of these commentators on Dharmakīrti) to a comparable idea under the heading of *saṃvṛtisajjñāna*, "awareness of what is conventionally existent," which he further distinguished as merely "having the appearance of perception" (*pratyakṣābhāsa*). As his **Nyāyamukha* has it,

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[67] Tillemans 2000: 6. Tillemans's observation comes in the course of his addressing Georges Dreyfus's contention that the Buddhist epistemologists should not, in fact, be characterized as positing an idea of the "given"; cf., Dreyfus 1996. As further evidence that it *is* apt to characterize Dignāga and Dharmakīrti as presupposing Sellars's "myth of the given," we can adduce Dignāga's appeal to the scriptural passage that famously distinguishes between "*nīlam*" (i.e., a bare sensation of blue) and "*nīlam iti*" (i.e., the propositional statement "That's blue"; cf., n.40, above). Interestingly, Sellars (1963) himself considers precisely similar examples (i.e., of bare color sensations, as compared with judgments in regard thereto), which have been just as standardly adduced by Western proponents of sense-datum theories as by Yaśomitra and Dignāga. To invoke this distinction (i.e., between "*nīlam*" and "*nīlam iti*") as a paradigm instance of *kalpanāpoḍhatva*, and at the same time to take *kalpanāpoḍhapratyakṣa* as foundational for all other knowledge, is precisely to make the mistake diagnosed by Sellars. Cf., nn.86-89, below.

[68] On this, see especially Dunne 1999: 318, ff. See also Tillemans 2000: 6, ff.; Katsura 1984: 216, 228; and Katsura 1993. See also Chapter 3, nn.144-147, and the discussion that follows.

[69] Dunne 1999: 320-321.

> ...*pratyakṣābhāsa* includes every awareness arising with reference to conventionally existent things such as pots, numbers, upward motion, existence in general, the quality of being a pot, etc., since [awarenesses of things like] these form some extraneous [conceptual] images and superimpose such extraneous contents upon what has real existence.[70]

"Perceptual judgement," as Shoryu Katsura has called the phenomenon Dignāga thus refers to, is therefore explicitly associated by Dignāga (and, following him, by Dharmakīrti) with awareness of what is merely *conventionally* existent (with garden variety macro-objects, insofar as they are reducible, being the examples of such). In contrast, bona fide perception is thus singled out as affording access to what is *ultimately* existent. Again, then, we see the idea that *svalakṣaṇas* constitute the set of ultimately real existents, and the corresponding idea that perception has access to these only and precisely to the extent that it is constitutively non-conceptual, such that it can register these "indefinable" things – with any subsequent "defining" or "naming" (i.e., any propositional knowledge derived from perception) *ipso facto* representing mere *saṃvṛtisajjñāna*. And we see again the idea that "conventionally existent" (*saṃvṛtisat*) things are (as for Vasubandhu) whatever is reducible, with the ultimately existent (*paramārthasat*) thus distinguished by its irreducibility.

We are thus presented with the idea that bare percepts are the raw data of subsequent judgments, and that it is only instances of the latter that are available to us as propositional knowledge – with the important additional qualification that bare percepts afford our only contact with "ultimately existent" (*paramārthasat*) things, while propositional knowledge necessarily represents awareness of merely "conventionally

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[70] Adapted from Katsura (1993: 68). I do not have access to the **Nyāyamukha* in any original languages, as it survives only in Chinese translation (as the *Yin ming cheng li men lun*; Taishō 1628, 1629). Cf., Tucci 1930. Katsura (1993: 69) associates this and comparable passages with *Abhidharmakośa* 6.4, for the commentary on which, cf., n.23, above. Note that Dignāga also addresses the subject of *pratyakšābhāsa* in the *Pramāṇasamuccaya*, at 1.7cd-8ab, where its object is similarly said to be *saṃvṛtisajjñāna*: "As for awareness of conventionally existent [things], it [merely] has the appearance of [being] perception, since, having imputed something extraneous to what is [only] conventionally true, it operates having conceptualized their forms" (from Kanakavarman's Tibetan, at Hattori 1968: 181-3: *kun rdsob tu yod paḥi śes pa ni kun rdsob tu yod pa rnams la don gṣan sgro btags nas deḥi ṅo bor brtags nas ḥjug paḥi phyir mṅon sum ltar snaṅ baḥo*; see also Hattori's nn.1.53-54, pp.95-97, where Hattori goes into considerable detail on the subject, following Jinendrabuddhi).

existent" things (*saṃvṛtisajjñāna*). This qualification makes clear how sharply distinct the two kinds of cognition are, and how much therefore rides on the characterization of perceptual cognitions as uniquely non-conceptual. The sharpness of the distinction renders acute the question of how (or indeed *whether*) these distinct moments of the cognitive process can be related. That is, if perceptual awareness is above all defined by its independence from conceptual thought, and if (more importantly) the latter is held to be the point of ingress for cognitive error, then how could one ever be certain *that* the judgment that follows a perception is in fact properly related to the perception in question? It seems, in other words, that the point in taking perceptual cognitions as foundational is that such cognitions alone provide privileged access, by virtue of their non-conceptuality; but one can always ask the second-order question of *what it is* one thus has access to; and insofar as such second-order questions will necessarily involve conceptual judgment, there seems to be no way, in principle, to distinguish one's conceptual judgments *about* what it is that one perceived, from *what* it is that was perceived. And this is precisely what Dignāga's sharp distinction tells us we ought to be able to distinguish; for the idea that our epistemic faculties have access to something-*an-sich just is* the idea that we can meaningfully separate our conceptual contribution from the uninterpreted data to which it contributes.[71] To put this all in the terms of representationalist epistemology, if relation of a knowing subject to a known object is thought to require the mediation of sense data, why is relation to the latter admitted as being direct? The question is relevant to the issue of "ascertainment" (*niścaya*) insofar as the latter, for Dignāga, is similarly thought to require the mediation of a constitutively different *kind* of cognition – in which case, one wonders how the latter could ever be shown to be related to the initial perception upon which it is ostensibly based.

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[71] As I will suggest in Chapter 4, Candrakīrti's view can be characterized as something like what Hilary Putnam calls "internal realism" – with such a view distinguished from more typical statements of metaphysical realism in the former's explicitly refusing that this distinction (i.e., between our epistemic contribution and the "thing in itself") makes any sense. Cf., Chapter 4, n.160.

This kind of regress, it seems to me, is inevitably a problem for any representationalist epistemology involving sense-data or the like; for if one starts by denying that thought could be directly related to the world, then it will always be a problem to explain how it can be *directly* related to *anything* – even its own contents. Such is, in any case, the kind of thing that the critiques elaborated in chapters 3 through 5 of this dissertation will be at pains to point out. It is, to be sure, important to note that Jonardon Ganeri, for one, thinks that such an "unbridgeable gap between the domains of perception and conception" is only apparent;

> For we must be careful to distinguish between the claim that perceptual objects are not *constructed* by conception, and the different claim that they are not *available* as contents of conceptual thought.... they are not available to thought only if one thinks of them as being something along the lines of an uninterpretable 'given'. In fact, however, the trope-theoretic analysis shows that we should not think of the objects and properties in Diṅnāga's system as belonging to distinct ontological domains at all. They are simply groupings along different axes in a single two-dimensional space of tropes.[72]

Against this, of course, I have suggested that Dignāga's account *is* one that involves claims regarding access to an uninterpreted given – which is, at any rate, apparently how his Indian critics will read him.

2.iv. Conclusion: Was Dignāga after *certainty*?

Be that as it may for Dignāga, the problem of an "unbridgeable gap" between perception (*pratyakṣa*) and judgment (*niścaya*) becomes, I think, particularly intractable as the system is thematized by Dharmakīrti. We can therefore conclude by considering what is surely one of the most significant differences between Dignāga and Dharmakīrti. To the extent that Dharmakīrti's thought *does* represent a logical development from that of Dignāga, the intractable nature of the problem in Dharmakīrti's thought shows

[72] Ganeri 2001: 125.

something of the problems that, in principle, face this whole approach. Even if we accede, however, to those who insist that Dharmakīrti does *not* carry forward the best insights of Dignāga, some attention to the change can nevertheless help us to raise the question of just what Dignāga *was* after. Here, I have in mind questions having to do with *certainty* and *necessity*. In particular, I am interested in whether or not Dignāga can be said to have been after anything like *certainty*; and to the extent that Dharmakīrti seems certainly (!) to have been after such, I am interested in the nature of Dharmakīrti's claim to have argued in the mode of *necessity*. To consider the latter point first: It seems to me that one of the greatest real differences between Dignāga and Dharmakīrti involves Dignāga's having developed exclusively *inductive* procedures for argument, while Dharmakīrti's "advance" consists in his claim to have realized *deductively* valid arguments.

Of Dignāga's many innovations, surely the most widely influential had to do with his formulation of the three characteristics of legitimate evidence (the *trairūpya*). This in turn involves his idea that the process of argument can be expressed entirely in terms of *relations between properties and loci*. In particular, Dignāga focused on the two properties which may be said to be involved in any instance of inference: the one that is adduced as probative (the *hetu*, "cause" or "reason"[73]), and the one that is in question (the *sādhya*, or thing "to be proven"). The validity of an inference then turns on the question of how these properties relate to three different classes of loci: those of the locus in question (*pakṣa*), things relevantly like the locus in question (*sapakṣa*), and things relevantly *un*-like the locus in question (*vipakṣa*). In particular, the form of question invariably answered by a valid inference is: given that the probative property (*hetu*; on a canonical example, *smoke*) is present in the locus in question (*pakṣa*; for example, *a*

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[73] It is characteristic of Indian philosophy in general that there is thus a conflation of what are, in Western philosophy, two distinct notions; for a remark regarding one interesting example of an Indian philosopher's seeming to exploit this conflation, cf., Chapter 3, n.81.

mountain),[74] are we entitled to infer that the property in question (the *sādhya*; for example, *fire*) is also present there? What would so entitle us would be the *conjunction* of both properties in at least one thing relevantly like a mountain (as, for example, a kitchen fire, which we know to be a locus of both smoke and fire), together with the fact of there being *nothing in the world* which is at once a locus of the probative property, and a non-locus of the property in question (nothing in the world, that is, which is a locus of smoke, but not of fire).[75]

Clearly, knowledge of this last condition – viz., knowledge to the effect that *there is nothing in the world* which is, say, fiery but not smoky – is a pretty tall order. Indeed, such knowledge is in principle impossible for any but an omniscient agent to obtain. Thus, with respect to what is yielded by Dignāga's inferences, Hayes concludes: "the judgement, reasonable though it may be, is still far from secure, since it rests upon an assumption that patterns observed in the induction domain are uniform throughout the universe." (131) Jonardon Ganeri considers this among the chief points at which Dignāga fails: "What we see here is Diṅnāga's adherence to a strictly inductivist model of extrapolation.... Diṅnāga, in spite of his brilliance and originality, could not quite free himself from the old model of inference from sampling." (2001: 120-1)

While Hayes, as we will see, disagrees with Ganeri's assessment of this as a failing on Dignāga's part, this is nevertheless precisely the issue regarding which

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[74] The fact of this property's being in the locus in question – *pakṣadharmatā* – thus constitutes the first of the three characteristics of the *trairūpya*.

[75] For a lucid account of Dignāga's views on this (one based on Dignāga's *Hetucakranirṇaya*), see Hayes 1988: 111-131. Hayes is among the many contemporary scholars who, recognizing the extent to which Dignāga's logic thus has to do with the spatial relation between properties and loci, has found it useful to express the various possible relations in terms of Venn diagrams. Note, too, Hayes's insistence that the relations expressed in terms of the *sapakṣa* and *vipakṣa* examples – viz., the relations (respectively) of *anvaya* and *vyatireka* – are, for Dignāga, logically distinct (though Hayes also notes that in Dharmakīrti's hands, such is no longer the case). That is, Hayes considers it important to emphasize that "the logical point made in terms of these ideas should not be understood as that of contraposition, since in that case the requirement that both obtain would be redundant." (p.118) Hayes thematizes the difference from contraposition thus: *anvaya* tells us that ~PHS>0 (i.e., the class of all things other than the *pakṣa* – what Hayes calls the "induction domain" – is such that there is at least one thing that possess both the *hetu* and the *sādhyadharma*), while *vyatireka* tells us that ~PH~S=0 (i.e., the induction domain is such that there are no items possessing the *hetu* but not possessing the *sādhyadharma*).

Dharmakīrti introduces what is clearly the most significant innovation regarding Dignāga's approach. John Dunne has aptly characterized the point made by Hayes as a problem inherited by Dharmakīrti: "the basic source of this doubt is the central problem of induction: how can we arrive at a general rule – such as the fact that smoke always indicates fire – by extrapolating from a finite number of observations?" (1999: 168-9) Thus, what Dharmakīrti wants is a law-like connection between the *hetu* and the *sādhyadharma* – one such that "every instance of the former *must* be accompanied by the latter." (*Ibid.*: 170; emphasis mine) The nature of such a connection (*sambandha*) is what Dharmakīrti thematizes in his *Sambandhaparīkṣā*, "Examination of Relations."[76] What Dharmakīrti develops under this heading is the idea that there are only two possible types of relations between existents: *causal* relation (*tadutpatti*, the relation of "arising from that"), and what I would call *categoreal* relation (*tādātmya*, with the Sanskrit often not incorrectly rendered as "identity," though this rendering clearly does not adequately capture the idea). To these types of relations there correspond two different types of inferential "reason" (*hetu*): *kāryahetu*, which grounds an inference from effect to cause; and *svabhāvahetu*, which grounds an inference from subordinate to superordinate categories. The former sort of inference, then, is based on the *tadutpatti* relation that necessarily obtains (to invoke the canonical example) between smoke and fire; and the latter is based on the *tādātmya* relation that necessarily obtains (according to a canonical example) between being an oak (*śiṃśapā*), and being a tree (*vṛkṣa*).[77] Given the idea that

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[76] Extant only in Tibetan (*'Brel pa brtag pa'i rab tu byed pa*; Tohoku 4214); see Frauwallner 1934.

[77] This canonical example shows what is wrong with taking Dharmakīrti's *tādātmya* relation as one of "identity"; for it is essential that the relation be *asymmetrical*, such that inference is valid in one direction but not in the other – just as it is necessarily the case that one can infer something's "being a tree" from its being an *oak*, but one cannot infer conversely (since not all trees are oaks). I suggest, then, that the relation in question is "categoreal" in that the necessary asymmetry is well preserved if we think of these as inferences from membership in a subordinate category to membership in a superordinate category – a relation that, as is typical of examples from Indian philosophy, can be well expressed spatially in terms of Venn diagrams. For more on this notion, see Dunne 1999: 233-246. Dunne makes what seems to me essentially the same point I have made in terms of relations between sub- and super-ordinate categories.

these are *necessary* relations, Dharmakīrti can plausibly be characterized as having tried to overcome the limitations of Dignāga's essentially inductive method.

I submit, however, that Dharmakīrti *cannot*, in principle, achieve his aims here, and that the attempt serves instead to show what is in principle problematic about the sharp distinction that this approach draws between (non-conceptual) perception and (conceptual) inference. This is particularly clear for the case of the inference from smoke to fire – the inference, that is, which is based on a putatively necessary causal relation (the *tadutpatti* relation). In fact, the project here verges on circularity; for it seems to me that the attempt to *explain* the connection by positing a *tadutpatti* relation just begs the question; for isn't the fact of a *tadutpatti* ("arising from that") relation *just what we wish to infer*, rather than the *warrant* for an inference? Dunne is quite right, then, to conclude that Dharmakīrti "is still left with the second task that is involved in specifying that relation: he must be able to formulate a reliable procedure for determining whether that relation is indeed in place."[78]

This is a particularly intractable problem, I suggest, insofar as the relation in question is one that must first have been *perceived* – if we know that smoke and fire are causally related, it is only because such is as we have *seen*. This is as we should expect, given this system's commitment to the view that inferences are invariably reducible to perceptions.[79] But the relation in question, if it is to count as a *necessary* relation, also must obtain *universally* – in which case, the relevant *sambandha* must be precisely the type of thing which, Dharmakīrti himself has insisted, cannot be "seen"![80] The problem

[78] Dunne 1999: 219.

[79] Cf., Kapstein 2001: 328, for a summary of Mipham's account of *svasaṃvitti*: "All that is experienced through other modes of direct perception is ascertained *as* direct perception through self-presentation. If that were not the case, direct perception would in effect be epistemically unfounded (Tib. *'grub mi 'gyur te*). Inference is rooted in direct perception. Direct perception is, in turn, made certain by self-presentation. After arriving at this, the experience of one's own mind, with respect to which there can be no error (Tib. *ma 'khrul blo yi nyams myong*), there can be no further proof...."

[80] Later proponents of Dharmakīrti's tradition, such as Mokṣākaragupta, will attempt to circumvent this problem by arguing that, in fact, *some* universals *are* perceptible. Thus, Mokṣākaragupta's *Tarkabhāṣa* argues: "But if only *svalakṣaṇa* (*svalakṣaṇam eva*) is the object of perception, and not abstractions, then

here, it seems to me, is precisely analogous to the problems that beset another fine example of epistemological foundationalism that aims at deductive certainty: that of John Locke, whose particular version of foundationalism, I think, represents among the most useful points of comparison for Dharmakīrti (and perhaps Dignāga as well). Thus, Locke's empiricism similarly involves a decidedly representationalist epistemology,[81] in which our degree of certainty necessary varies in relation to the *kinds* of things known: "... we have an intuitive Knowledge of our own *Existence*; a demonstrative Knowledge of the *Existence* of a God; of the *Existence* of any thing else, we have no other but a sensitive Knowledge, which extends not beyond the Objects present to our Senses."[82]

Moreover, as for Dignāga and Dharmakīrti, Locke's hierarchy of degrees of knowledge is one in which "intuitive" certainty is *foundational*, with any other type of knowledge necessarily reducible to such.[83] Locke's putative demonstration of the existence of God is especially instructive, since it turns on the same sort of problem I have identified in Dharmakīrti. Locke's demonstration (to sketch it briefly)[84] starts from

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how is the pervasion between the two universals of smoke and fire to be grasped by perception? This isn't a problem, since [the point is that] *svalakṣaṇa* is the object *only of that*, according to [a use of the particle *eva* which functions to] exclude what is not connected; [the point is] not that *svalakṣaṇa* alone is its object, according to [a use of the particle *eva* which would function to] exclude connection with everything else. Thus, an abstraction, too, [can be] the object of it [i.e., perception]" (Singh 1985: 26: *nanu yadi svalakṣaṇam eva pratyakṣasya viṣayo na sāmānyaṃ tadānīṃ dhūmadahanasāmānyayor vyāptiḥ kathaṃ pratyakṣeṇa gṛhyatām? na-ayaṃ doṣaḥ, yato 'yogavyavacchedena svalakṣaṇaṃ tasya viṣaya eva, na tv anyayogavya[va]cchedena svalakṣaṇam eva tasya viṣayaḥ iti; kiṃ tarhi sāmānyam apy asya viṣayaḥ*).

[81] Locke 1689: 525: "Since *the Mind*, in all its Thoughts and Reasonings, hath no other immediate Object but its own *Ideas*, which it alone does or can contemplate, it is evident, that our Knowledge is only conversant about them."

[82] *Ibid.*, pp. 552-3.

[83] In this connection, it is interesting that the foundational sort of knowledge is not, for Locke, *perception*, with Dignāga and Dharmakīrti's account of such making it seem like the sort of thing that would come under the heading of Locke's "sensitive Knowledge, which extends not beyond the Objects present to our Senses." Among the more recent philosophical projects that stand in Locke's lineage, that of Bertrand Russell may be said to be similar, with Russell's idea of "knowledge by acquaintance" being closely analogous to Locke's "intuitive" knowledge. (Cf., Russell 1912: 46-59.) As with Locke's, Russell's account is thus such that universals or abstractions can also serve as the objects of such knowledge. Indeed, among the paradigm cases of such knowledge, in Russell's thought, would be knowledge of mathematical truths – with the eminently empiricist account of Dignāga and Dharmakīrti seemingly having no obvious way to accommodate the idea that such examples might be as basic to the structure of our knowledge as Dignāga and Dharmakīrti took perception of particulars to be.

[84] This argument is the topic of Book IV, Chapter 10 of Locke's *Essay* (1689: 619, ff.).

what he took (reasonably enough, perhaps) to be the intuitive certainty that, (1), we exist and have ideas; he then added that, (2), *we are also intuitively certain that every effect has a cause*; hence, (3), there must exist a God who is the cause of us and of the ideas to be found within us. There are (as would be more clear given a fuller account of it) many problems with Locke's claimed demonstration. But it seems to me that by far the most crippling problem concerns his claim in step two – viz., the claim that we are *as certain* that every effect is produced by a cause as we are that we exist; and, moreover, that we are certain of this *in just the same way* (i.e., we are *intuitively* certain; we just *see* that this is the case). But in fact, it is not at all clear that we just "see" this fact in anything like the same way as we just "see" that we exist. And yet, Locke needs this claim if he is to succeed in reducing all the other steps back to the foundational certainty of step one.

Chains of argument that function by reducing everything down to some foundational certainty (and in particular, some foundational certainty such as is provided by a putatively unique and distinct sort of awareness) *must*, in principle, make the kind of leap we see here – or else, fail ever to get the two different kinds of awareness related to each other. Such is the problem, I submit, for Dharmakīrti; for he emphasizes perception as representing a constitutively different *kind* of awareness (i.e., a uniquely non-conceptual kind); and yet, insofar as it is precisely this uniqueness that gives perception its privileged access to what Dharmakīrti takes to be most real, he needs to bring all other instances of knowledge in relation to some perceptual cognition. Whether or not the idea of *pratyakṣapṛṣṭalabdhaniścaya* ("certainty obtained subsequent to perception") is adequate to the task of relating these, and even if (as Ganeri holds) the gap between different kinds of awareness is not unbridgeable, it is nevertheless the case that Dharmakīrti's claims to deductive certainty necessarily founder on his own requirement that the *tadutpatti* relation be one that obtains *universally*, and at the same time that it be

perceivable – for whether or not Dharmakīrti can explain how these universals are perceptible, the latter requirement introduces what is "just the [old] induction problem again."[85]

Again, though, I am suggesting that these issues represent something that is *in principle* problematic for Dharmakīrti, such that he *cannot* coherently resolve the issue given the other intuitions he wants to retain. Perhaps the best way to state this is to invoke John McDowell's diagnosis of what he sees as among the most discomforting philosophical "anxieties" bequeathed to contemporary philosophers by the tradition of post-Enlightenment philosophy. McDowell follows Wilfrid Sellars in wondering how experience could (as empiricists demand) function as a "tribunal" of knowledge, given that "experience" and "knowledge" seem to occupy fundamentally different "logical spaces." Thus, Sellars characterizes "knowledge" as an essentially normative concept: "In characterizing an episode or a state as that of *knowing*, we are not giving an empirical description of that episode or state; we are placing it in the logical space of reasons, of justifying and being able to justify what one says."[86] In contrast, "empirical description" of "experience" places events in the "logical space of nature."[87] That is, to the extent that we understand "experience" as consisting in causally efficacious "impingements by the world on a possessor of sensory capacities,"[88] we seem to be dealing with the law-like phenomena of natural science. But as McDowell says,

[85] Brendan Gillon, as quoted by Dunne 1999: 219. Among other things, the peculiarly problematic nature of Dharmakīrti's claim to be arguing in the mode of "necessity" has implications with respect to whether his arguments can plausibly be characterized as *transcendental* arguments. Paul Griffiths (1998) has suggested this characterization, but this seems wrong to me; for transcendental arguments, as I understand them, involve a peculiar sort of claim to necessity, as Robert Stern (2000: 8-9) understands: "... in claiming that *X* is a necessary condition for the possibility of experience, we are not taking this to be a matter of causal or natural necessity.... can this form of conceptual analysis give us insight into modal truths that constitute neither natural nor logical constraints, but something in between, such as *metaphysical* limitations on what is possible?" My understanding of transcendental arguments will be elaborated in Chapter 4; specifically with respect to Griffiths's characterization of the Buddhist Epistemologists as exemplifying such, cf., Chapter 4, n.12.

[86] Sellars 1963: 169; quoted by McDowell 1996: xiv.

[87] McDowell (1996: xiv) offers this as a coinage that is "Sellarsian at least in spirit."

[88] *Ibid.*: xv.

> On these principles, the logical space in which talk of impressions belongs is not one in which things are connected by relations such as one thing's being warranted or correct in the light of another. So if we conceive experience as made up of impressions, on these principles it cannot serve as a tribunal, something to which empirical thinking is answerable.[89]

In other words (to anticipate some of the conceptual terms that will figure in the following chapter), to the extent that first-order cognitive events are thought to consist in essentially causal transactions between existents, it becomes difficult to explain how the second-order *justification* of the resultant beliefs can consist in the adducing of reasons.

Of course, Dignāga and Dharmakīrti were not, like Sellars and McDowell, writing in an intellectual context that presupposes a sharply distinct realm of "nature," which notion surely represents a part of the post-Enlightenment inheritance. Nevertheless, what is relevantly the same is the extent to which Dignāga and Dharmakīrti espoused a fundamentally *causal* account of knowledge – and, further, the extent to which (as I have already emphasized) they stressed the unique (because uniquely non-conceptual) character of the first-order cognitive events yielded by this process. Thus, for example, we can look to Dharmakīrti, who explains how, given the Buddhist postulate that all existents exist only "momentarily," one could ever really be confident in what one is perceiving. That is, in the vanishingly small moment that transpires between one's sensory contact with some object, and the production of a sensory *awareness* by that contact, the object originally contacted will have changed; in which case, how can one justifiably think that the object presented to awareness is the same as the object "out there"?[90] Dharmakīrti's answer: "If it's asked how something could be apprehended at a

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[89] *Ibid.* This is, as McDowell notes (p.xxiii), simply another way to put the problem that motivated Kant – that is, the problem of how freedom can fit into the natural world. McDowell diagnoses this philosophical anxiety, of course, in order to develop a "cure"; I have here followed only his diagnosis, and have not explored the question of whether, for example, the alternative he goes on to recommend may or may not be instructive vis-à-vis the Buddhist Epistemologists.

[90] This "time-lag" problem is one of the most frequently recurring issues addressed by Georges Dreyfus in his account of Dharmakīrti's philosophy (1997b: *passim.*). The problem remains essentially unchanged if it is conceived not in terms of objects existing "out there," but simply in terms of awarenesses whose phenomenological character is such as to seem that way – if it is conceived, in other words, in terms of the idealist metaphysics often attributed to Yogācāra thinkers such as Dignāga and Dharmakīrti.

different time [i.e., given momentariness], [we answer:] Philosophers understand apprehendability precisely as being a *cause* that is capable of projecting an image into awareness."[91] That is, Dharmakīrti attempts to overcome the seemingly irreducible difference between *subjects* and *objects* by explaining that a subject's awarenesses are simply among the *effects* produced by that object (together, of course, with the proper conditions in the subject).[92] "Subject" and "object" are related, then, simply as moments in the same causal sequence. But if that is the case (and if, further, the first-order cognitive events thus caused are irreducibly distinct from all subsequent, conceptual elaborations thereof), then it becomes difficult to explain how second-order cognitive events (such as the adducing of reasons in hopes of achieving *niścaya*) could be both related to the causally produced first-order events, and at the same time be freely adduced by an agent whose mastery of the requisite dialectical forms (i.e., the formulation of valid syllogisms as thematized by Dignāga) suggests conformity to the essentially *normative* idea that characterizes the "logical space of reasons."

I have developed this digression on what I see to be the problems particularly with Dharmakīrti's version of the Epistemologists' project since the trajectory of Dharmakīrti's thought relates to a question that arises for the case of Dignāga, too: that is, the question of whether Dignāga can be said to have claimed *certainty* as the outcome of the kind of arguments he thematizes. Clearly, Dharmakīrti attempted to secure certainty by introducing the mode of *necessity* to arguments whose structure resembles that endorsed by Dignāga, and hence can be said to have transformed the latter's

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[91] *Pramāṇavārttika* II.247 (Miyasaka 1971/72: 74): *bhinnakālaṃ kathaṃ grāhyam iti ced grāhyatāṃ viduḥ / hetutvam eva yuktijñā jñānākārārpaṇakṣamam //.* Immediately before quoting this passage, Mokṣākaragupta (Singh 1985: 21) gives an even more straightforward statement: "The awareness that apprehends an object is the *effect* of that object; for an object, by virtue of being apprehended, is the cause of an awareness" (*arthagrāhakajñānam arthasya kāryam; artho hi grāhyatvāt jñānasya kāraṇam*).

[92] It had, of course, been recognized by Ābhidharmikas that the object perceived is only one among several causal conditions relevant to the production of awareness. Consider, in this regard, the standard fourfold enumeration of *pratyayas* ("causal conditions," which include the *hetu-*, *adhipati-*, *ālambana-*, and *samanantara-pratyayas*), among which the *ālambanapratyaya* ("intentional object condition") designates the object perceived.

exclusively inductive approach.[93] As we have seen, Ganeri seems to think such an attempt was called for, lamenting that "in spite of his brilliance and originality, [Dignāga] could not quite free himself from the old model of inference from sampling." Richard Hayes, in sharp contrast, considers Dharmakīrti's innovations to have compromised the spirit of Dignāga's thought, introducing an undue tone of dogmatism to what Hayes sees as the properly "skeptical" spirit of Buddhist thought that he takes to be paradigmatically exemplified by Dignāga:

> It is ironic that in his very attempt to secure the truth of the traditional teachings of Buddhism, to establish the authority of the Buddha himself as a teacher, and to defend established Buddhist doctrine as much as possible from the sharp-minded critical attacks of some non-Buddhist thinkers, Dharmakīrti managed to violate the essentially open-minded and critical spirit of many of his predecessors, putting in its place a dogmatic edifice that eventually very nearly imprisoned a number of the later Indian and Tibetan Buddhist traditions.[94]

In light of this conviction, it is interesting that Hayes thinks that in fact Dignāga *is* best characterized as thinking that his arguments would yield *certainty* – would yield it, that is, if certainty were possible, with Hayes reading Dignāga as a "skeptic" to the extent that, he thinks, Dignāga's whole point just is to show that certainty is *not* possible.

First, let us consider the case for Hayes's claim that Dignāga does, in a sense, aim at certainty. This case has centrally to do with Dignāga's essentially representationalist (or, as Hayes prefers, "phenomenalist") epistemology – an epistemology, that is, which (per the *Ālambanaparīkṣā*) involves appeal to something like sense-data as the direct objects of sensory perception. This appeal works closely with Dignāga's case for the

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[93] Note, though, Kapstein's observation that while "necessity is often *expressed* in Indian arguments, for instance, through the use of the gerundive, [there is a] question ... whether it was *theorized* as a feature of logical operations" (2001: 157n; cf., Chapter 4, n.98). In a related vein, Kapstein (2001: 110n) has aptly noted "contemporary discussions of certainty (*niścaya*) in Indian and Buddhist thought too often presuppose that it must be *apodictic certainty* that is at stake, without entertaining the possibility that Indian thinkers may have other sorts of certainty in mind. To the best of my knowledge, the distinction between what I am calling apodictic and non-apodictic certainty is nowhere clearly thematized within the traditions I am considering."

[94] Hayes 1988: 310. Hayes's characterization of the "essentially open-minded" nature of authentic Buddhism seems to me to be in line with the thinking of a great many contemporary Western proponents of Buddhism, as nicely exemplified in Stephen Batchelor's *Buddhism without Beliefs* (1997), which extols an essentially "agnostic" vision of Buddhism.

nature and role of *svasaṃvitti*, "apperception" or "self-presenting awareness" – a notion which holds that the minimally necessary objects of perception (the "sense-data") have to do essentially with *awareness itself*.[95] Hayes makes clear that the reason why claims to certainty can turn on this notion is precisely as we have seen in J. L. Austin's characterization of the foundationalism of A. J. Ayer[96]: "At least one of the reasons that one might regard acts of awareness as sensa is that we are perfectly safe in saying that the fact of awareness itself cannot be denied.... It may be that 'Tomorrow is Friday' is a false proposition at the time that it constitutes the content of a thought, but it is impossible to be in error regarding its being the content of the thought of which it seems to be the content."[97] That is, the one thing that *cannot* coherently be doubted is the mere fact of having sensations – and the point of the foundationalist deployment of a sense-data theory is to build the larger structure of knowledge on the incorrigible foundations of this unique kind of certainty. Thus, for Dignāga, perception affords privileged access to the world of really existent *svalakṣaṇas* insofar as perception is uniquely non-conceptual; but insofar as there is, ultimately, "only the one fact of *sva-saṁvitti*," this self-presenting awareness is merely "metaphorically differentiated into *pramāṇa* and *prameya*."[98]

However, while Hayes thus emphasizes (appropriately, in my view) the extent to which Dignāga's procedures are rightly thought to involve claims to certainty, he nevertheless ventures that this move is meant to serve what is in the final analysis a

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[95] For a summary of Dignāga's arguments regarding *svasaṃvitti*, see Hayes 1988: 140-142.

[96] Cf., n.45, above.

[97] Hayes 1988: 136. Hayes continues, making clear why Candrakīrti, in particular, will have a problem with this deployment of a sense-datum theory: "... all cognitions that involve conventions are ruled out as sensations.... Even though such superimpositions of conventions upon experience may be sanctioned by society and may be consistent with the rest of our experience, and are in a sense therefore correct or true thoughts, they cannot be regarded as instances of coming directly into contact with just things themselves in the way that sensation does." (137) As evidence "for the claim that Diṅnāga restricts the term 'sensation (*pratyakṣa*)' to cognitions that are certain in the sense of error being impossible" (Hayes 1988: 139), Hayes adduces (and elaborates) on *Pramāṇasamuccayavṛtti ad* 1.17 – part of which we have discussed above; cf., nn.39, 42 above.

[98] Hattori 1968: 106, n.1.65.

skeptical approach. While Hayes's interpretation here seems to me to represent a certain tendentiousness on his part, it must also be said that it results from an appropriate application of the hermeneutical principal of charity – specifically, with respect to the third condition of Dignāga's *trairūpya*, which requires the unattainable knowledge that *nothing in the world* is at the same time a locus of the probative property, and a non-locus of the *sādhyadharma*. Dignāga's *trairūpya* thus seems to require something that is in principle unattainable. While (as we have seen) Ganeri takes problem this as evidence of Dignāga's failure to "free himself from the old model of inference from sampling," Hayes rightly contends that this is only a problem on one reading of what Dignāga is after. Hayes's contention, though, is that Dignāga is not finally after the *achievement* of certainty; rather, Dignāga's point, on this reading, is precisely to show that *such can never be attained.*

> Diṅnāga could, in other words, be stating a canon of certainty that no judgement ever measures up to.... On a skeptical reading of Diṅnāga, his message would be to the effect that the only thing that is certain is that we are having the sensations we are having at this very moment. For it should be clear that very few of our judgements in ordinary life pass the standards set by the three characteristics of legitimate evidence. Taken in its strictest interpretation, none of the judgements of any but a fully omniscient being passes.[99]

Hayes is surely correct to develop an interpretation that attributes to Dignāga the best argument possible in light of his extant works, and it is surely correct that apparent "failures" to address a problem very often turn out in fact to be addressing different problems. Nevertheless, what I find problematic here is the weight that must be borne by what Hayes takes to be an obviously absurd consequence – i.e., he seems to take the fact that only "a fully omniscient being passes" as enough to show that Dignāga means to be a skeptic, and states the upshot of Dignāga's arguments thus: "Therefore, since we cannot place full reliance on the teachings of any teacher or any tradition of teachers, our only

[99] Hayes 1988: 166-7.

hope in the final analysis lies just in our own resources as individuals."[100] However, it is not self-evidently the case that Dignāga would consider this an obviously absurd entailment; indeed, one compelling indication that precisely the opposite is the case is to be found at the very beginning of the *Pramāṇasamuccaya*, which begins: "I bow down to him who exists as a *pramāṇa*, who desires the welfare of beings, the teacher, the *sugata*, the protector."[101] Dignāga's auto-commentary elaborates: "Here, at the beginning of the treatise, the expression of praise for the Bhagavān – who has become a *pramāṇa* by virtue of his perfection in cause and effect – is for the sake of arousing devotion (*gus pa*; Skt., *śraddhā*)."[102]

Dharmakīrti thought this *maṅgala* verse sufficiently significant that the entire *pramāṇasiddhi* chapter of his *Pramāṇavārttika* is ostensibly framed as a commentary on just this verse.[103] And, while we have seen that there is some reason to doubt Dharmakīrti's claims to faithfulness as an expositor of Dignāga, it is nevertheless clear that Dignāga is, at the very least, honoring the rhetorical gestures that the tradition calls for – and perhaps making the stronger point that, whatever he may say about "reliable epistemic warrants" (*pramāṇa*), Dignāga thinks it is finally the Buddha himself, as "teacher" (*ston pa*, Skt. *śāstṛ*) and "protector" (*skyob*, Skt. *tāyin*), who represents the final court of appeals.[104] And among the things that Dharmakīrti, at least, may have attempted to demonstrate in the course of establishing that the Buddha warrants this epithet, is that the Buddha is, in fact, omniscient.[105] Dignāga's prominently placed homage and

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[100] *Ibid.*, p.167.

[101] *Pramāṇasamuccaya* 1.1a-b; Tibetan at Hattori 1968: 175: *tshad mar gyur pa 'gro la phan par bzhed / ston pa bde gshegs skyob la phyag 'tshal nas /*. On this verse, see, inter alia, Franco 1997: 15, ff. (and especially p.16, n.3).

[102] *'dir rab tu byed pa'i dang por rgyu dang 'bras bu phun sum tshogs pas tshad mar gyur pa nyid kyis bcom ldan 'das la bstod pa brjod pa ni gus pa bskyed par bya ba'i don du'o.*

[103] See, in addition to Franco (n.101, above), the article by Jackson 1988.

[104] With such a reading in mind, cf., especially, Chapter 5, nn.98-102.

[105] Such, at least, is the view of Tibetan commentators on Dharmakīrti such as rGyal-tshab-rje; see Jackson 1993: 396-8. Consider also, Śāntarakṣita, the last chapter of whose monumental *Tattvasaṃgraha*

devotional epithets seem to me, at the very least, to call into question Hayes's contention that Dignāga obviously means to show that "we cannot place full reliance on the teachings of any teacher or any tradition of teachers."

But if I am right thus to be suspicious of Hayes's contention, then it is no longer clear that Dignāga thinks the certainty at which he appears to aim is thought by him to be utterly beyond reach. Perhaps more to the point, though, whether or not Hayes is right in suggesting that Dignāga ultimately aims to show that certainty is impossible, it is still important to appreciate the kind of challenge his arguments are perceived to lay down for his critics – important to appreciate, that is, that even if Dignāga means to show that certainty is unachievable, one upshot of his approach is that arguments that do not conform to his attempts will fall particularly far short of the bar he has raised. If Dignāga is plausibly characterized as a skeptic, in other words, it is nevertheless the case that he has called for submission of all knowledge claims to his essentially epistemological court of appeals, and that claims not ostensibly based on the privileged faculty of perception will not even make it to trial.

However Dignāga's project may finally be characterized, then, it is not difficult to imagine having what are, given different axiological commitments or different conceptions of ultimate truth, good reasons for wishing to oppose it. Thus, the privileged status which Dignāga accords to perception would particularly undermine any project (such as, we will see, that of the Mīmāṃsakas) that centrally involves appeals that cannot be substantiated by perception, or any project (such as Candrakīrti's) that eschews Dignāga's empiricism and instead depends on *a priori* modes of analysis. Moreover, it is not only easy to imagine *wishing* to oppose Dignāga's project, but good arguments for doing so; for as I have indicated in sketching Dignāga's account, there are points of

(entitled "*atīndriyārthadarśiparīkṣā*, "investigation of one who sees objects that vastly exceed the senses") is effectively dedicated to demonstrating the possibility of an omniscient Buddha.

tension that are vulnerable to critique. Thus, I have suggested that the sharpness of Dignāga's distinction between (non-conceptual) perception and all subsequent (conceptual) knowledge raises the question of how instances of the latter are to be related to instances of the former – which is in effect to say, the question of how second-order conceptual cognitions (such as the propositional knowledge *that* one is perceiving *X*), to the extent that they are held to be constitutively derivative, can ever be demonstrably derived *from* a constitutively non-conceptual cognition. Something like this question, I suggest, represents the basic point of departure for the Mīmāṃsaka critique of Buddhist epistemology, which is the subject of Chapter 3.

A more specifically Buddhist concern might then have to do with the coherence of Dignāga's radical extension of essentially Ābhidharmika conceptions of Buddhism's reductionist project – and, more generally, with the very idea of the "ultimately real" as consisting in an enumerable set of existents, to which some particular epistemic faculty might have privileged access. Such will be the point of departure for Candrakīrti (Chapters 4 and 5), who questions, inter alia, the very idea of something as simply "self-characterizing," and who deploys a mode of argument designed to circumvent Dignāga's demands for justification. For whether or not (per Richard Hayes) Dignāga can plausibly be said to aim at showing that certainty is unachievable, it nevertheless seems clear that his rigorous delineation of the procedures that would (even if per impossible) yield such amount to a demand for *justification*. The Mīmāṃsakas, faced with this demand for justification, will develop an epistemology which particularly calls into question the possibility of demonstrating that perception (or any other belief-forming practice) has a privileged status; while Candrakīrti, faced with the same demand, will argue, in effect, that the epistemologist's attempt to advance a technical account of our epistemic practices involves a fundamental self-contradiction.

CHAPTER 3
Prima Facie Justification:
The Mīmāṃsaka Doctrine of Intrinsic Validity as a Critique of Buddhist Epistemology

3.i. Introduction: On the under-appreciation of Pūrva Mīmāṃsā

The constitutive concern of the school of Pūrva Mīmāṃsā is with the correct interpretation and understanding of the Vedic literature – and in particular, of the earlier portions of the Vedic literature, i.e., those concerned with the performance of ritual sacrifice.[1] Accordingly, the bulk of the literature of this school is devoted to hermeneutical concerns, with very sophisticated arguments brought to bear, for example, on questions such as how to decide when a scriptural passage is intended figuratively, and how to decide which of two enjoined but mutually exclusive ritual actions is to be performed. In matters of hermeneutics, this school of thought was surely one of the most influential in India, exercising its influence all the way down to the present in everything from poetics to law.

What is rather less often appreciated is that Pūrva Mīmāṃsakas, in arguing for the validity and authority of the Vedas (that is, in first arguing for the value and necessity of undertaking the rest of their project), were also major players in the larger context of Indian "philosophy," and particularly, Indian debates regarding epistemology (or *pramāṇavāda*, the "discourse on reliable warrants"). As one of the "orthodox" schools of

[1] In this regard, Pūrva Mīmāṃsā is to be distinguished from Uttara Mīmāṃsā (more popularly known as "Vedānta") by virtue of the latter's constitutive concern with the interpretation and understanding of the later portions of the Veda – that is, the *vedānta*, the "culmination of the Vedas," which is basically synonymous with the *Upaniṣads*. On the relation between Pūrva and Uttara Mīmāṃsā, see, inter alia, Clooney 1990:255-258, 1994. The most useful general study of Pūrva Mīmāṃsā probably remains that of Ganganatha Jha (1964). For a more recent bibliographic survey, see also Verpoorten 1987.

brahmanical thought that are often taken to represent the main philosophical options of India, Pūrva Mīmāṃsā is usually thought to warrant at least cursory treatment in discussions of Indian philosophy; after all, the orthodox schools collectively represent Indian "philosophy," so if Mīmāṃsā is to be discussed, surely it is under the rubric of "philosophy."[2] However, Mīmāṃsā seems in this regard rarely to receive much *more* than cursory treatment, a fact which is explained, if at all, by this school's having contributed little of "philosophical" relevance. Indeed, Mīmāṃsā's constitutive concern with demonstrating the authority of the Vedas prompts many modern observers to characterize this tradition as virtually antithetical to truly philosophical inquiry. Thus, despite its signal influence in the intellectual milieu of classical India, Mīmāṃsā receives relatively scant attention in the modern literature on intellectual practice in India. In Surendranath Dasgupta's *History of Indian Philosophy*, for example, Mīmāṃsā receives a review about one third the length of those accorded to the traditions of Nyāya-Vaiśeṣika and Śaṃkara's Vedānta. In introducing his review of the Mīmāṃsā doctrine concerning the authority of *śabda* ("language" or "testimony"), Dasgupta apologizes for thus introducing a topic omitted from his discussions of other schools, saying that discussion of this topic "has but little value with us, though it was a very favourite theme of debate in the old days of India."[3] B. K. Matilal, though advancing a more nuanced discussion of the doctrine we will consider, at one point dismissively observes that "the scriptural way of knowing is by definition infallible! This is a sort of fundamentalism."[4] Even so sensitive an observer as Francis Clooney, in discussing the relation between Pūrva Mīmāṃsā and Uttara Mīmāṃsā, in one place refers us to one of his earlier works for "a

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[2] On the complex question of applying the comparative category of "philosophy" to the study of classical Indian *darśanas*, see Halbfass 1988.

[3] Dasgupta 1922, vol.1: 394.

[4] Matilal 1986: 32.

description of the *nonphilosophical Mīmāṃsā* which is the true predecessor to Advaita."[5]

What seems to inspire the dismissive attitude taken by many observers of Pūrva Mīmāṃsā is, in fact, one of the chief doctrines of Mīmāṃsā: that of *svataḥ prāmāṇya*, or, as I will render it, "intrinsic validity." The word *prāmāṇya* is a secondary derivative (what Sanskrit grammarians call a *taddhita*) from the word *pramāṇa*. Literally, then, *prāmāṇya* simply means something like "of or relating to *pramāṇa*." As for the latter word, there is a systematic ambiguity in the Indian philosophical tradition, with *pramāṇa* alternately referring to a reliable *means* of knowing,[6] and to an episode of *veridical awareness* such as results from the exercise thereof.[7] In the present context, as will be clear from the passages we consider, the word very often has the latter sense, and thus I will generally translate it as *veridical awareness*.[8] *Prāmāṇya* then refers to that abstract quality in virtue of which a *pramāṇa* has whatever status it has. As we will see, how we decide exactly *what* that abstract quality is will have considerable influence on how we understand the Mīmāṃsaka doctrine in question. As for the indeclinable word *svataḥ*, it literally means something like "from itself," and is typically rendered with an adverb

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[5] Clooney 1993: 212n (my emphasis). I hasten to add that, this problematic characterization of Mīmāṃsā notwithstanding, this is an excellent book. Clooney here refers us to his earlier *Thinking Ritually: Rediscovering the Pūrva Mīmāṃsā of Jaimini* (1990).

[6] That is, a cognitive *instrument*. The standard gloss of this sense is: *Tena pramīyate iti pramāṇam*; or as the *Nyāyabhāṣyam* has it, "A *pramāṇa* is that by means of which one knows an object" (*sa yenārthaṃ pramiṇoti tat pramāṇaṃ*). I prefer to render *pramāṇa* in this sense as "reliable warrant," though William Alston's term *doxastic practice* (on which, see below) would also do nicely. It is with this sense of the word in play that Indian philosophical works typically begin by surveying a fairly standard list of candidates for such (e.g., perception, inference, analogy, tradition, testimony) before endorsing whatever subset of these the school in question admits as irreducibly criterial; for the belief-forming practices thus adduced are considered to represent "criteria" of valid knowledge, in something like the sense in play in Chisholm 1966: 56-69.

[7] The standard gloss of this sense (which amounts simply to an alternative gloss on the *-ana* suffix) is *pramīyate iti pramāṇam* ("what is known is a *pramāṇa*"). This sense of the word overlaps with *pramā* and *pramiti*, and particularly has affinities with the Buddhist contention that the result of a *pramāṇa* (i.e., a *pramāṇaphala*) is identical with the *pramāṇa* itself. Outside the Buddhist circle, few would explicitly affirm this sense, but it should be quite clear that this sense is frequently in play in the context of the present discussion.

[8] When I don't simply leave it untranslated, as is convenient to do, for example, when the argument specifically trades on the etymological relation between *pramāṇa* and *prāmāṇya*.

such as "intrinsically." Thus, the doctrine of *svataḥ prāmāṇya* holds that *pramāṇas* ("veridical awarenesses") have their veridical status by virtue of an abstract quality of *prāmāṇya* that simply obtains intrinsically.

This doctrine is the cornerstone of Mīmāṃsaka attempts to explain the authoritativeness of the Vedas, and insofar as that project is often deemed a fundamentalist exercise antithetical to true "philosophy," it is no doubt central to the widespread perception that Mīmāṃsā has "but little philosophical value." This is particularly so when, as is often done, the word *prāmāṇya* is rendered as "*truth*."[9] If we follow this convention, we might well be led to consider this doctrine among the less serious contributions to issue from Indian discussions of "reliable warrants" or "criteria of valid knowledge"; for according to a thumbnail sketch of the role of this doctrine in the Mīmāṃsā system, the Vedas are true because they are simply *intrinsically* true, with no empirical evidence able to falsify them. It will in due course become clear why "truth" is a tendentious and misleading rendering of *prāmāṇya*, which I think is much more appropriately rendered as *validity*. Regardless of how we understand *prāmāṇya*, though, the mere fact that Mīmāṃsakas are concerned to argue that this property belongs to *scriptures* is enough to implicate them in a project that is virtually anathema to post-Enlightenment philosophy, and it is, no doubt, because the doctrine of intrinsic validity is thus deployed in the service of securing the authoritative status of the Vedas that it has received almost no attention.[10]

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[9] This is how both J. N. Mohanty and B. K. Matilal render the word. Thus, for example, Mohanty 1966 is a study and translation of the *prāmāṇyavāda* chapter of Gaṅgeśa's *Tattvacintāmaṇi*, and Mohanty renders *prāmāṇya* as "truth" throughout the book, with neither apology nor explanation. As we will see, this decision ends up begging some important questions. Less problematic, but not very helpful in the context of our discussion, is John Dunne's rendering of *prāmāṇya* as "instrumentality" (Dunne 1999: *passim*); for this clearly relates only to the first sense of *pramāṇa* as cognitive *instrument*, without having any obvious bearing on the sense of *pramāṇa* as "veridical awareness." Cf., n.146, below.

[10] That it has received little attention is attested by the fact that one of the most useful surveys of the doctrine remains that of G. P. Bhatt (1962: 129-145). A more recent survey is in D'Sa 1980: 180-191. D'Sa offers texts and translations of most of the relevant passages from Kumārila, but little in the way of sophisticated analysis. See also Rani 1982: 93-109, which gives a useful survey of sources, though again, without any analysis; and Schmithausen 1965: 189-201. The most philosophically sophisticated treatments

This inattention to the epistemology of Pūrva Mīmāṃsā is regrettable; for in fact, the Mīmāṃsaka doctrine of *svataḥ prāmāṇya* represents a compelling critique of foundationalist epistemologies, which, in India as in the post-Enlightenment West, have tended to be predominant. It is, perhaps, this very predominance of foundationalist epistemologies in Indian philosophy that has led many readers of Mīmāṃsā to misrepresent the doctrine of intrinsic validity; for many philosophers (both traditional and modern) persist in understanding the doctrine in terms of the foundationalist presuppositions that are precisely what this doctrine means to call into question. Thus, for example, B. K. Matilal, nicely capturing the foundationalist tenor of the Indic discourse on ways of knowing, is surely right to observe that, in general, "a *pramāṇa* in the Sanskrit tradition is conceived as a combination of both evidence and causal factor.... it is both a piece of evidence for knowing something and also a cause, in fact the most efficient causal factor ... of the mental episode called knowledge."[11] But Matilal – who, like J. N. Mohanty, tends to view Indian philosophy through the lens of the later Indic tradition of Navya-Nyāya – is so committed to this presupposition that he fails to see that *this is precisely what is called into question by the Mīmāṃsaka doctrine of intrinsic validity*.

This is the case, at least, given what I will argue is the best rational reconstruction of the Mīmāṃsaka doctrine of intrinsic validity – and particularly, of that doctrine as it is developed by the so-called "Bhāṭṭa" Mīmāṃsakas, i.e., those who follow the commentator Kumārila Bhaṭṭa (c.620-680 CE), who first elaborated an account of intrinsic validity as the cornerstone of a comprehensive epistemology. I will argue that

are those of B. K. Matilal (1986: 143-148), J. N. Mohanty (1992b: 138-144; this largely follows the discussion in Mohanty 1966), and John Taber (1992). I will particularly address the latter three works in the course of this chapter.

[11] Matilal 1986: 135. Cf., Mohanty 1992: 199: "The theories are predominantly causal. The *pramāṇas* are construed both as (specific) causes of (specific sorts of) true cognitions and also as providing evidence and justificatory ground for them."

the tradition of interpretation following Kumārila attests two main interpretations of this doctrine. In this regard, I follow John Taber, whose excellent article on the subject is, so far as I am aware, the first work to have given a nuanced account of the different interpretations of intrinsic validity defended by Kumārila's commentators Bhaṭṭa Uṃveka (fl. c. 710) and Pārthasārathimiśra (fl. c. 1075).[12] I would like to advance Taber's insight not only by providing more extensive textual evidence, but also (and more importantly) by introducing the conceptual apparatus of a contemporary interlocutor whose works seem to me ideally suited to the task of refining the distinction first highlighted by Taber. Here, I have in mind William Alston, whose book *Perceiving God* develops an argument with some striking affinities with the Mīmāṃsaka arguments.[13]

Thus, following Alston, I will characterize one interpretation of the Mīmāṃsaka doctrine of intrinsic validity (that exemplified by Uṃveka) as a *causal* account, and the other (that chiefly exemplified by Pārthasārathimiśra) as a *doxastic* account.[14] Briefly, this will be to say that Uṃveka's account of *svataḥ prāmāṇya* understands the intrinsic capacity of *pramāṇas* as a specific *causal capacity* for bringing about a particular state of affairs (namely, the correspondence of awareness with its object). On Uṃveka's interpretation, then, "intrinsic truth" may well turn out to be an adequate rendering of *svataḥ prāmāṇya*. On Pārthasārathi's account, in contrast, it is not the production of a particular state of affairs that is "intrinsic"; rather, what is intrinsic is simply the fact that

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[12] Taber 1992.

[13] Alston 1991. Alston's critique of classical foundationalism has been separately developed, without the constructive concern that predominates in the second half of *Perceiving God*, in Alston 1993. However, it is Alston's deployment of this critique as part of a project in philosophy of religion that makes for some of the most interesting affinities with the Mīmāṃsaka project, and so I have found it important to make use of his critique specifically as it figures in his work on philosophy of religion. More on this below. It is worth noting that Richard Swinburne makes an argument very similar to Alston's, though Swinburne deploys the argument rather differently; cf., Swinburne 1991: 254-271.

[14] These terms will be elaborated when we turn to Alston, below.

awareness confers *prima facie justification*. It is with this interpretation chiefly in mind that I prefer to render *prāmāṇya* as "validity"; for on Pārthasārathi's interpretation, *prāmāṇya* functions mainly as an *epistemic* notion, one that picks out some fact about *how we know* what we know. It is thus important to render the word in such a way as to avoid prejudging the question of *truth*. It is, however, still important to render *prāmāṇya* in such a way as to avoid remaining *too* neutral with respect to the truth of the beliefs thus held to be intrinsically justified; for this discourse often trades on an equivocation between epistemic and ontological notions, so that any translation needs to be capable of doing double duty if it is to be uniformly retained.[15] Moreover, we will see that there is still room for holding that prima facie *justified* beliefs can sometimes be judged *true* (with the Mīmāṃsakas not wanting to settle for anything less than this with respect to the Vedas), and that we have good reasons for thinking that this epistemic sense of *prāmāṇya* still involves its truth-conduciveness.

In the end, though, I will argue that Uṃveka's interpretation compromises the major insight of Kumārila's doctrine of *svataḥ prāmāṇya*, and thus remains vulnerable to the kinds of objections brought against it both by its (mainly) Buddhist critics and by contemporary scholars, and we are right to consider it problematic. Pārthasārathi's

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[15] Part of the problem, it will become clear, is that the *taddhita* derivative '*prāmāṇya*' preserves the systematic ambiguity of the word from which it is derived (cf., nn.6, 7, above). Thus, no matter whose interpretation we have before us, we are likely to be faced with equivocation between an epistemic sense (related to the word *pramāṇa* as picking out something about *how we know what we know*; cf., Dunne's translation of this as "instrumentality"), and an ontological sense (related to the word *pramāṇa* as picking out a veridical awareness; cf., then, Matilal and Mohanty). Of course, "validity" is not without its problems as a translation equivalent, owing mainly to its technical sense as designating the formal property in virtue of which arguments are judged to be coherent, independent of the truth of their premises. This technical sense of "validity" has, to be sure, the advantage (given the interpretation I am arguing for) of remaining strictly neutral with respect to *truth* (while still conveying a sense of truth-conduciveness); it seems, however, not all that well suited to conveying the sense of something that has especially to do with the *epistemic* situation of persons. With that in mind, I have also entertained the possibility of rendering *prāmāṇya* here as *credibility* – for to say that an awareness is "intrinsically credible" would be to say that it is intrinsically capable of *eliciting the belief of its subject*, quite independent of truth. At many points, in fact, "credibility" may be just the right idea. Nevertheless, this seems too tendentious a translation, since not only will it be clear that it is particularly inadequate in translating Uṃveka's treatment of the subject, but since even Pārthasārathi's treatment sometimes equivocates. My frequent use of the words "justified" and "justification" reflect particularly the influence of my attention to Alston (see below), and similarly function to highlight a particularly *epistemic* condition.

doxastic account, on the other hand, represents a formidable challenge particularly to the epistemology of Buddhist philosophers in the tradition of Dignāga and Dharmakīrti. If we thus understand the doctrine of intrinsic validity as essentially a *doxastic* epistemology that derives its force from claims to *prima facie justification* (as opposed to claims to intrinsic truth),[16] then critics such as Matilal and Mohanty (not to mention such classical Indian critics of the doctrine as the Buddhists Śāntarakṣita and Kamalaśīla) turn out to be pressing their case against it in terms of precisely the presuppositions the doctrine is meant to question – and, to the extent that the Mīmāṃsakas are persuasive in arguing that those presuppositions are problematic, the idea of intrinsic validity turns out to be rather more formidable than often supposed. Let us, then, see how the doctrine of *svataḥ prāmāṇya* develops, and how we ought to understand it.

3.ii. Background to the doctrine: Śabara's commentary on the *Mīmāṃsā Sūtras*

The central text for the tradition of Pūrva Mīmāṃsā is Jaimini's collection of aphorisms, the *Mīmāṃsāsūtras*.[17] As is typical of the sūtra genre, the passages in Jaimini are so pithy as to be largely unintelligible without a commentary. The oldest (and most influential) extant commentary on Jaimini's text is that of Śabarasvāmin, the so-called *Śābarabhāṣya*.[18] Śabara's commentary is traditionally divided into sections (*pādas*) according to the general topic treated. The passages relevant to the elaboration of the epistemology of the Bhāṭṭa Mīmāṃsakas are in the opening section of the commentary,

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[16] Again, though, I will show that there is still room on this account for a robust conception of truth, and for the claim that the beliefs in which we are justified are truth-conductive.

[17] Dasgupta (1922, vol.1: 370) dates these at c. 200 BCE.

[18] The dates of Śabara are uncertain; Dasgupta (1922, vol.1: 370) places him in the first century CE, while Potter 1970 gives 400 CE. Śabara's commentary contains significant extracts from an earlier commentary that is no longer extant: the *Vṛtti*, whose nameless author is referred to by Śabara simply as the *vṛttikāra*, "author of the *Vṛtti*."

the so-called *Tarkapāda* (i.e., the "section on reasoning"). In particular, it is the commentary on Jaimini's second sūtra that gets the whole discussion going. The entire text of this sūtra reads: "*dharma* is a goal that is defined by injunction."[19] This provides the locus for a discussion of epistemology insofar as Śabara's commentary takes this passage to be telling us what means of knowledge (i.e., what *pramāṇas*) can and what cannot serve to convey knowledge of *dharma*, which, as an essentially unseen quality, is not available to sense perception.[20] The burden of Śabara's commentary on this sūtra, then, is to explain why the defining characteristic (*lakṣaṇa*) of dharma is its being available only by means of (Vedic) injunctions (*codanā*). Since such injunctions represent an instance of verbal testimony (*śabda*), this contention effectively raises the question of the status of language as a means of valid knowledge (i.e., as a *pramāṇa*). Hence, the entire Mīmāṃsā project is launched, and the concern will be to show that language *as such* is intrinsically valid, and that such validity is only compromised by the agency or intentions of speakers (with the Vedas, as authorless, thus being immune to charges of invalidity on this score).[21]

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[19] *Codanālakṣaṇo 'rtho dharmaḥ* (*Jaiminisūtra* 1.1.2).

[20] The stipulative definition of *dharma* as something unavailable to sense perception is, as Sheldon Pollock has aptly said, "the essential a priori of Mīmāṃsā" (1989: 607). It is difficult to say exactly what sort of "unseen quality" *dharma* is. The introduction to this sūtra tells us that *dharma* is what "connects a person with the highest good" (*sa* [i.e., *dharma*] *hi niḥśreyasena puruṣaṃ saṃyunakti iti pratijānimahe*; this passage is conventionally printed as Śabara's *avataraṇa*, but Śabara's commentary then cites the line, suggesting that it may, in fact, occur in Jaimini's sūtra). For more on the Mīmāṃsā conception of *dharma*, and on the kinds of arguments which this conception is thought to require, see Junankar 1982. According to Junankar's most succinct summary statement, "What is conducive to happiness is dharma and what is not so conducive is adharma." (p.51) It is, of course, a complex question why it was thought by Mīmāṃsakas that only some quality unavailable to the senses could answer to this description. The main point, though, is that *dharma* was envisioned by Mīmāṃsakas as always *bhaviṣyat* as opposed to *bhūtam* – that is, always the future result of present actions, and never something already existent and ready to hand. This stipulation drives a great deal of Mīmāṃsaka thought, and is neatly captured in the maxim *bhūtaṃ bhavyāya kalpate* – "what exists subserves what should be brought into being." For an interesting analysis of how the same principle guides Mīmāṃsaka analyses of sentence-meaning, cf., McCrea 1998: 78: "in any sentence it is the element of 'becoming' or 'bringing into being' (bhāva or bhāvanā) expressed by the verb (or, more precisely, the verbal suffix) which is predominant...."

[21] As we will see, the essentially transcendent character of the Vedas (i.e., their *apauruṣeyatva*, their "being beyond the human") is a key part of the Mīmāṃsaka doctrine. On this view, see, inter alia, Clooney 1987. This claim will largely be bracketed from consideration in the early part of our discussion, but we will return to this in offering a concluding assessment of the arguments.

Thus elaborating on the validity of scriptural injunction (*codanā*), Śabara anticipates the kind of objection that, well over a thousand years later, we are still likely to see when confronted with a claim to the authority of testimony: surely we are all aware of many cases in which people speak falsely, and testimony ought therefore to be presumed false until proven true on other (usually perceptual) grounds. Śabara's response to this imagined objection, insofar as it grounds the later development of the doctrine in question, is worth quoting at length. Referring to his imagined interlocutor's objection that injunction could "say" something false (*nanv atathābhūtam apy arthaṃ brūyāc codanā*), Śabara rejoins:

> What was said (by the objector) – i.e., (both) "it says" and "is false" – is contradictory (*vipratiṣiddham*); (for) by "says" is meant *causes one to be aware* (*avabodhayati*); (an utterance, that is), becomes the cause of (someone's) being aware. Something can be said to cause one to be aware when, given its existence as a cause, one becomes aware. And if it is understood, given an injunction, (that) "heaven occurs due to the *agnihotra* sacrifice," how could one say it is not so? How could one (ever) be *aware* that it is not so? It is contradictory (*vipratiṣiddham*) to say one knows an object that is not present (*asantam artham*). And based on the sentence "one desirous of heaven should perform a sacrifice," it is not understood in an uncertain way (*saṃdigdham*) that "heaven may or may not come about"; and, being understood as determinate, this could not be false. For a false conception is one that, having arisen, is overturned; but this one is not contradicted at any other time, nor with respect to any other person, any other situation, or any other place. Therefore, it is not false.[22]

It is largely on the basis of this passage that Kumārila will proceed to elaborate the doctrine of intrinsic validity as the cornerstone of a comprehensive epistemology. Before turning to Kumārila, then, let us take note of the most significant concepts at play in Śabara's rejoinder. The main point of this rejoinder is to call our attention to the fact

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[22] The translation is mine, based on the edition of the Ānandāśrama Sanskrit Series (Abhyankar 1976: 16-17). The text is: *Vipratiṣiddham idam ucyate--"braviti" "vitathaṃ" ca iti. Braviti ity ucyate 'vabodhayati, budhyamānasya nimittaṃ bhavati iti. Yasmiṃś ca nimittabhūte saty avabudhyate so 'vabodhayati. Yadi ca codanāyāṃ satyām "agnihotrāt svargo bhavati" iti gamyate, katham ucyate na tathā bhavati-iti? Atha na tathā bhavati iti katham avabudhyate? Asantam artham avabudhyata iti vipratiṣiddham. Na ca svargakāmo yajeta ity ato vacanāt saṃdigdham avagamyate "bhavati vā svargo na vā bhavati" iti, na ca niścitam avagamyamānam idaṃ mithyā syāt. Yo hi janitvā pradhvaṃsate na etad evam iti, sa mithyā pratyayaḥ. Na ca-eṣa kālāntare puruṣāntare 'vasthāntare deśāntare vā viparyeti. Tasmād avitathaḥ.* The text of Śabara's commentary on the first five of Jaimini's sūtras has also been edited (with a German translation) by Erich Frauwallner (1968). Frauwallner's edition of this passage (which has only minor variations) is at pp.16-18.

that linguistic utterances *bring about some awareness* (*avabodhayati*); that is, some cognitive event takes place as the result of one's being confronted with a sentence, some cognition or idea is engendered. Śabara's main point is that, so long as the idea thus engendered is clear or "determinate" (*niścita*), then one is entitled to proceed on the basis of this idea. Of a sentence such as "one desirous of heaven should perform a sacrifice," then, Śabara will mainly challenge us to answer the question: *do you understand the sentence*? If not, then the sentence is discredited by its engendering a doubtful (*saṃdigdham*) cognition. If we do understand it, however, then the cognition engendered by the sentence must be credited as essentially "determinate." The point, then, is simply that if linguistic utterances are *intelligible*, then they impart some conceptual content, and thus engender episodes of "knowledge" – not in the technical sense familiar in Anglo-American philosophy (according to which, "knowledge" consists in, say, justified true belief), but in the looser sense that they convey some unambiguous *meaning*.[23]

Śabara's point, in other words, concerns simply the production of awareness, and his argument does not depend on showing anything with respect to the putative *object* of that awareness. Thus, when Śabara says that, "being understood as determinate, [a linguistic utterance] could not be false," he seems to mean by "determinate" (*niścita*) simply *not ambiguous* – i.e., not necessarily as regards the *referent* of the utterance (which, in the case of *dharma* or heaven, is unseen), but simply regarding its *meaning*. With his further point that one could never be in a position to *know* that this sentence is false, Śabara effectively raises the possibility that this injunction might be falsified by some perception. He is, in other words, challenging his opponent to adduce *perceptual* evidence that heaven is not, in fact, obtained as a result of properly performed Vedic sacrifices. But since heaven is, for Mīmāṃsakas, always understood as the future effect

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[23] In fact, one of my contentions will be that, when the doctrine of *svataḥ prāmāṇya* is understood as essentially concerning *prima facie justification*, the whole point of the doctrine just is, in a way, that the definition of knowledge as "justified true belief" cannot be sustained. More on this below.

of present actions, it is never present in the way required for it to be available to perception.[24] Thus, the Vedic injunction ("one desirous of heaven should perform a sacrifice") should be presumed valid insofar as it is intelligible, and insofar as it has not been falsified on other (perceptual) grounds.

3.iii. Kumārila's elaboration of intrinsic validity as part of a comprehensive epistemology

Kumārila Bhaṭṭa, if we are to judge by the attention given him by other Indian philosophers, stands as the progenitor of one of the most influential schools of thought in the history of Indian philosophy. As was typical of the scholastic mode of philosophy that was standard in India, the major works of Kumārila are all framed as commentaries on the foundational texts of his tradition – and particularly, on Śabara's *bhāṣya*, with each of Kumārila's works (the *Ślokavārttika*, the *Tantravārttika*, and the *Ṭupṭikā*) addressing a particular *pāda* of Śabara's commentary. As the commentary to the *Tarkapāda* (i.e., the "section on reasoning," from which section we have taken our passage from Śabara), it is the *Ślokavārttika* that concerns us (and that, indeed, is most widely taken up for discussion in Indian philosophy). It is an interesting feature of the *vārttika* genre of commentary (as opposed to such commentarial genres as *bhāṣya, vṛtti, ṭikā*, etc.) that there is greater scope for criticism of the foundational text than is typical of most Sanskritic commentaries. Indeed, in the context of grammar, a *vārttika* is "a rule which explains what is said or but imperfectly said and supplies omissions."[25] Thus, Kumārila's *Ślokavārttika* may be said to stand in relation to Śabara in something like the same way

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[24] Hence, the significance of Jaimini's fourth sūtra, which tells us that perception can only bear on something "present" or "existent": *satsaṃprayoge puruṣasya-indriyāṇāṃ buddhijanma tat pratyakṣam...* ("when a person's sense faculties are in contact with something existent, the resultant cognition is perception..."). But heaven, of course, is not "*sat*," but always *bhaviṣyat*; cf., n.20, above.

[25] Apte 1992: 1417. Apte notes that the term "is particularly applied to the explanatory rules of Kātyāyana on Pāṇini's Sūtras."

that Dharmakīrti's *Pramāṇavārttika* stands in relation to Dignāga's *Pramāṇasamuccaya*; that is, both of these works of Kumārila and Dharmakīrti often seem only nominally to be commentaries on their predecessors, and chiefly to represent significant innovations. It is, then, characteristic of Kumārila to have seen in Śabara's discussion of *codanā* the need for better elaborating and defending a comprehensive epistemological doctrine.

Since one of my concerns will be with which of the later interpreters represents the best account (both exegetically and philosophically) of Kumārila, I would like, in this section, to present Kumārila's arguments in such a way as to remain largely neutral with respect to those later interpretations. Accordingly, I will here present the relevant passages from the *Ślokavārttika* with a minimum of interpretive remarks of my own. The particularly relevant verses of the *Ślokavārttika* are verses 32-61 of the section corresponding to Śabara's treatment of Jaimini's "*codanā sūtra*" (i.e., the sūtra that defines *dharma* as knowable only by way of Vedic injunctions).[26] Along the way, I will also make reference to some of the corresponding passages in the *Tattvasaṃgraha* of Śāntarakṣita – a Buddhist work whose penultimate chapter gives a lengthy treatment of the doctrine of *svataḥ prāmāṇya*, including a significant number of quotations from Kumārila's no longer extant *Bṛhaṭṭikā*.[27]

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[26] It is thus customary to cite the *Ślokavārttika* in terms of the corresponding sūtra of Jaimini, each sūtra being designated in terms of its main topic. Thus, the section we will consider would be cited as *codanā*, 32-60, though it might also be cited as II.32-60, insofar as the *codanā* sūtra is the second of Jaimini's sūtras. These verses can be found in the following editions of Kumārila (each of which includes the commentary of one of Kumārila's interpreters): S. K. Ramanatha Sastri's edition of Uṃveka's *Ślokavārtikavyākhyā Tātparyaṭikā* (Sastri 1971: 42-59; henceforth, this edition will be cited as *ŚVTT*); K. Sāmbaśiva Śāstri's edition of Sucaritamiśra's *Kāśikā* (Sastri 1990: 78-95; henceforth, *Kāśikā*); and Dvārikādāsa Śāstri's edition of Pārthasārathimiśra's *Nyāyaratnākara* (Śāstrī 1978: 41-49; henceforth, *Ratnākara*).

[27] The *Tattvasaṃgraha*'s preservation of fragments of the *Bṛhaṭṭikā* was shown by Erich Frauwallner (1962). According to Frauwallner, verses 2812-2815 and 2846-2918 of the *Tattvasaṃgraha* quote from Kumārila's lost work. It is not only, of course, for its preservation of fragments of a lost work of Kumārila that the *Tattvasaṃgraha*'s treatment of this subject is significant; we will return to the *Tattvasaṃgraha*, at various points in this chapter, for more lengthy consideration of this Buddhist work's understanding and assessment of the Mīmāṃsaka doctrine.

Interestingly, the discussion begins with one of the few verses from this section of Kumārila's text that explicitly refer to Śabara's comments on the *codanā* sūtra. Recall that Śabara said that it was "contradictory" (*vipratiṣiddha*) to hold that a sentence at once *says* something (in the sense of "causes some awareness"), and *is false*. Alluding to the fact that it is a contradiction (*vipratiṣiddhatvam*) thus to hold that an intelligible sentence could obviously be false, Kumārila makes clear why this point calls for the elaboration and defense of a more comprehensive epistemology: "In this regard, the fact of its being contradictory [to hold this] applies also in the case of the Buddha's speech, since that produces cognition, too; therefore, this is a futile rejoinder."[28] Śabara's answer, then, is not sufficient to the Mīmāṃsaka task (i.e., that of securing the unique authority of the Vedas), insofar as the criterion of intelligible communication of meaning manifestly applies in the case of numerous other scriptures, too. It is interesting (and significant) that it is particularly the validity of *Buddhist* utterances that is here adduced as the unwanted consequence of Śabara's argument; for, as we will see, the doctrine elaborated by Kumārila will be particularly framed in opposition to the Buddhist epistemology of Kumārila's predecessor Dignāga (and, for Kumārila's commentators, the Buddhist epistemology of Dharmakīrti, who wrote after Kumārila).[29]

Having thus raised the obvious objection to Śabara's argument, and having thus signaled that it is particularly the possibility of *Buddhism's* being proved valid that must be averted, Kumārila continues, making clear that the issue calls for a comprehensive epistemology: "First of all, this [question], whose scope is *all* awarenesses, should be

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[28] *ŚV, codanā* 32: *tatra vipratiṣiddhatvaṃ buddhavākye 'pi yujyate / tato 'pi pratyayotpattes tasmāj jātyuttaraṃ tv idam //.*

[29] It is important thus to note (and will become more clear in due course) that Kumārila's engagement with Buddhists is particularly with the *Buddhist epistemologists* (i.e., with Dignāga and his followers). Thus, even in the section of the *Ślokavārttika* that putatively addresses *śūnyavāda*, it is really always Dignāga whom Kumārila seems to have had in mind, and Kumārila's commentators most frequently cite Dignāga and Dharmakīrti.

investigated: are validity and invalidity intrinsic or extrinsic?"[30] By noting that the scope of the investigation is *all* awarenesses, Kumārila emphasizes that, while the Mīmāṃsakas are chiefly interested in the authority of Vedic injunction (*codanā*) as a reliable warrant (*pramāṇa*), the best defense of such injunction is to be sought in an inquiry into the nature and status of *all* reliable warrants. The commentator Uṃveka nicely explains why this is so: "Precisely in order to prove the validity of injunction, it is examined whether or not there is validity or invalidity in awarenesses whose validity or invalidity is already certain."[31] In other words, the strategy will be to look at less controversial instances of awareness (chiefly, of course, perceptual awarenesses), and to ask what degree of confidence we are entitled to have with respect to those.

Since Kumārila has raised the issue in terms of the possibility of both *validity* and *invalidity* being either intrinsic or extrinsic, there turn out to be four possible permutations, and the next several verses spell out the first two of these. He addresses these first two possibilities (viz., that both *prāmāṇya* and its opposite are intrinsic, or that both are extrinsic), however, in fairly short order, as he considers them to be manifestly untenable. Interestingly, he frames his consideration and rejection of these first two possibilities as coming from a *Buddhist* interlocutor, out of whose mouth we then get the conclusion: "Therefore, their intrinsic *in*-validity should be accepted, and validity [should be accepted] as based on something else. The reasoning [that supports this conclusion] is given.... [in the following verses]."[32] Thus begins Kumārila's more lengthy consideration

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[30] *codanā* 33: *sarvavijñānaviṣayam idaṃ tāvat parikṣyatām* [variant: *pratikṣyatām*] / *pramāṇatvāpramāṇatve svataḥ kiṃ parato 'tha vā* //

[31] Uṃveka, *ŚVVT*, p.42: *codanāprāmāṇyasiddhyartham eva niścitaprāmāṇyāprāmāṇyeṣu jñāneṣu katham aprāmāṇyaṃ prāmāṇyaṃ vā-iti parikṣyate*. Uṃveka is here answering the objection that, insofar as the topic of this section is *codanā*, it is not relevant to introduce the question of other *pramāṇas* to the commentary on this part.

[32] *codanā* 37-8: *Vijñānavyaktibhedena bhavec ced aviruddhatā / tathāpy anyānapekṣatve kiṃ kva-iti na nirūpyate // Tasmāt svābhāvikaṃ teṣām apramāṇatvam iṣyatām / prāmāṇyaṃ ca parāpekṣam atra nyāyo 'bhidhiyate //*

of the alternative that really concerns him: the one which holds that awareness, as such, is intrinsically *in*-valid, with its validity to be accepted only when proven by appeal to some criteria beyond the awareness itself. As we will see later on, Kumārila has good reasons for thinking that it is the *Buddhists* who uphold the view he now proceeds to sketch – although, as I will suggest, the reasons that he attributes to the holder of this position may not represent the most significant reasons for considering this a Buddhist account.[33] We will have more to say about the Buddhist account of *prāmāṇya* later on; for now I mention the Buddhist identity of the present interlocutor only to emphasize that the view that will now be sketched is the one that is most antithetical to Kumārila's own view, and the one that he will judge to be most deeply problematic.

Kumārila's imagined interlocutor thus presents the case for considering that awareness is intrinsically characterized by its *in*-validity, with demonstration of its validity requiring explanation: "Since it's not a positive entity (*vastu*), invalidity could not be based on defects in the cause; but since validity *is* a positive entity, it is produced by the efficacies of those [causes]."[34] The logic here is simple (though particularly the commentary of Uṃveka makes clear that the issue involves some very tricky disagreements between Buddhists and Mīmāṃsakas on the logic of negation and the nature of non-existent objects): it is only *validity* that is somehow *existent*, with *in*-validity defined simply as the absence thereof; hence, it is only the coming-to-be of validity that requires explanation, with the mere absence thereof not requiring any causal explanation. Apart from the arcane and difficult disagreements between Buddhists and Mīmāṃsakas on the nature of non-existent objects, what is most significant here is the

[33] But cf., nn.129, 137, below.

[34] *codanā* 39: *Aprāmāṇyam avastutvān na syāt kāraṇadoṣataḥ / vastutvāt tu guṇais teṣāṃ prāmāṇyam upajanyate //.* The word *guṇa* typically means "merit," "virtue," "quality," etc., but I prefer to render it as "efficacy" in this context, where it is particularly *epistemic* "virtues" that are in play. Cf., though, n.40, below.

extent to which Kumārila's interlocutor here raises an eminently *ontological* point. That is, the logic of this argument depends on seeing "validity" as significantly like *objects* – i.e., as *produced* in the same way that, say, a pot is produced by a potter (with the mere absence of a pot not requiring any appeal to a cause). This way of framing the issue, that is, reflects the presupposition that the production of validity is best analyzed as an eminently *causal* process. According to what I will argue is the best reading of the Mīmāṃsaka doctrine, this is chief among the presuppositions that will be called into question.

The interlocutor continues: "For if validity [arises] naturally, and, on the other hand, its absence is produced, then how is validity in awarenesses such as dreams avoided?"[35] Here, we see one of the characteristic concerns that drives the kind of causal account on offer here: proponents of such an account are likely to be impressed by examples of manifestly *in*-valid awareness (such as dream-awareness), and hence, to seek an account that can explain the possibility of error. The appeal to causality is meant to provide just such an explanation; for it seems clear that one of the things that distinguishes dream-awareness from, say, your present perception of this paper, is the presence, in the latter case alone, of some object that may reasonably be thought to *cause* the awareness. Kumārila's interlocutor clarifies that this is indeed the logic driving his account, which is motivated by the desire to avoid the unwanted consequence of crediting manifestly invalid awarenesses: "On my [i.e., Buddhist] position, validity isn't produced [in dream awarenesses] since [such awarenesses] are without [the right kind of] cause; hence, there does not occur the unwanted consequence of a non-entity's being causally efficacious."[36] Again, what distinguishes dream awarenesses is the absence of the right

[35] *codanā* 40: *Prāmāṇyaṃ hi yadā-utsargāt tadabhāvo 'tha kṛtrimaḥ* [following the readings in *Kāśikā, Ratnākara; ŚVTT* has "*...tadabhāvo 'py akṛtrimaḥ*"] / *tadā svapnādibodhe 'pi prāmāṇyaṃ kena vāryate //*

[36] *codanā* 41: *Matpakṣe kāraṇābhāvāt prāmāṇyaṃ na-upajāyate / hetumattvaprasaṅgo 'to na bhaviṣyaty avastunaḥ //*

kind of causes; and without appeal to causes, there seems no way to account for the difference between dreams and perceptual awareness. Hence, one who denies the role of causes is forced to concede that dreams, too, are valid – and, insofar as it is assumed that validity *must* be caused, that the validity of dreams has the wrong kind of cause (a "non-entity").

As against the case of dreams, Kumārila's interlocutor thinks that there is an obvious cause whose presence in perceptual awareness reliably distinguishes the latter from dreams: "The senses and so forth, and [their] efficacies, are the cause of that [i.e., of validity]. There are two kinds of absence of that [validity]: either because of the defectiveness of the senses, or given the absence of one or the other [i.e., the senses or the efficacies]."[37] Thus, what waking consciousness has that dreams lack is causally efficacious *sense faculties*, the function of which is compromised either by defectiveness (e.g., ophthalmia), or sheer absence (e.g., blindness). Hence, it is the *validity* of awareness that is to be explained by appeal to properly functioning causes, with *in*-validity, as the mere absence of validity, considered the "default setting." This, then, is the basic reasoning attributed to the Buddhists, whose imagined representative here states the conclusion thus: "Therefore, purity of [its] cause is the cause of the validity of awareness; invalidity is obtained intrinsically, by virtue of absence of this. Invalidity is based on positive and negative concomitance, it is not based on faults; for when there is non-awareness, whose basis is simply the absence of a cause, it [validity] simply isn't found."[38]

The last words attributed to this interlocutor at this point remind us of the

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[37] *codanā* 42: *Indriyādi guṇāś ca-asya kāraṇaṃ, tadasad dvidhā / duṣṭatvād indriyādinām* [variant: *vendriyādinām*], *abhāve 'nyatarasya vā* //

[38] *codanā* 44-5: *Tasmāt kāraṇaśuddhatvaṃ jñānaprāmāṇyakāraṇam / svabhāvato 'pramāṇatvaṃ tadabhāvena lakṣyate* [variant: *labhyate*] // *Anvayavyatirekābhyām aprāmāṇyaṃ na doṣataḥ / na-ajñāne dṛśyate hy etat kāraṇābhāvahetuke* //

governing concern here: "Thus, because of the absence of any person, or, [even] given the presence [of a person], because of the impossibility of purity [of cause], the validity of [Vedic] injunctions doesn't make sense, because of their being without a foundation."[39] This is a succinct summary of how this causal account of validity is thought to rule out the possibility that the Vedas are valid, and the point is here said to be damning even if we accept the Mīmāṃsaka stipulation that the Vedas are authorless. Thus, insofar as the demonstration of validity requires appeal to some *cause*, the Mīmāṃsaka contention that the Vedas were not composed by any agent means there is no author to serve as the locus of the kinds of qualities that could bring about their validity.[40] Or, if it were conceded that the Vedas *were* composed by some author, then, insofar as no person (except, of course, a Buddha!) has flawlessly reliable perceptual faculties, the Vedas would have to be admitted to be the work of someone whose absolute epistemic "purity" (*śuddhi*) is impossible. Either way, this kind of causal account of validity is here held to rule out the Vedas as a potential locus of validity.

Having thus elaborated what he takes to be the most deeply problematic (and threatening) account of *prāmāṇya*, Kumārila now turns to the elaboration of the preferred account, which is almost exactly the opposite of what we have just seen. The first several verses of this section constitute the *locus classicus* for the doctrine of intrinsic validity:

The validity of all *pramāṇas* should be accepted as intrinsic; for a capacity not

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[39] *codanā* 46: *Tataś ca puruṣābhāvāt sati vā śuddyasambhavāt / nirmūlatvāt pramāṇatvaṃ codanānāṃ na yujyate //*

[40] For Buddhists, the kinds of *guṇas* that could cause scriptures to be valid are, in particular, the characteristics of a Buddha, and *guṇa*, in this context, thus seems to connote something much more like its conventional meaning of "virtue," "merit," etc.; for standard examples of the relevant qualities are the Buddha's compassion, etc. Sucaritamiśra alludes to such qualities when he says: "even given that the virtues of a speaker, such as compassion (*kāruṇikatva*) and so forth, do not exist in the Veda, the validity [of the Veda] is established simply by the absence of deficiency" (*Kāśikā*, p.90: *ata eva asatsv api vaktṛguṇeṣu kāruṇikatvādiṣu vede doṣābhāvamātrād eva prāmāṇyaṃ sidhyati*). For an expression of the Buddhist view, cf., *Tattvasaṃgraha* 1501: *dveṣamohādayo doṣā yathā mithyātvahetavaḥ / kṛpāprajñādayo 'py evaṃ jñātāḥ satyatvahetavaḥ //* ("Just as faults like aversion and delusion are causes of falsity, in the same way things like compassion and wisdom are known as causes of truth"). Kamalaśīla comments: *tayoś ca guṇadoṣayoḥ samyaktvamithyātvahetvor āśrayaḥ puruṣaḥ* ("and the person is the locus of these two, i.e., virtues and faults, which are the causes of correctness and falsity...").

> already existing by itself cannot be produced by anything else.[41] For existents depend upon a cause for their coming-into-being (*ātmalābhe*), but the operation of already constituted existents (*labdhātmanāṃ*) with respect to their proper effects is precisely intrinsic.[42] If, even when an awareness had already arisen, an object were not ascertained until purity of its [i.e., the awareness's] cause were known based on some other *pramāṇa*, then in regard to that [first awareness], the arising of some other awareness, based on some other cause, would have to be awaited; for purity is as good as non-existent until it is decisively settled. [Thus,] there would be validity in that awareness [only] given the pure cause of that [subsequent awareness], too, and likewise of *that* one, and [one] comes to rest nowhere.[43]

The argument is a straightforward but compelling one: if it is thought that awareness is valid only once it has been demonstrated to be such (i.e., by appeal to a subsequent awareness of the causes of the initial one), infinite regress ensues; for the subsequent, justifying awareness would, as itself an awareness, similarly require justification, and so

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[41] *codanā* 47: *Svataḥ sarvapramāṇānāṃ prāmāṇyam iti gamyatām* [variant: *gṛhyatām*] / *na hi svato 'sati śaktiḥ kartum anyena śakyate* //. Schmithausen (1965: 196-7, n.122) notes, apropos of *padas* c-d: "Man beachte die sāṃkhyistisch klingende Argumentation...." The "resonance" he is pointing out is specifically with the Sāṃkhya doctrine of *satkāryavāda*.

[42] *codanā* 48: *ātmalābhe hi bhāvānāṃ kāraṇāpekṣitā bhavet / labdhātmanāṃ svakāryeṣu pravṛttiḥ svayam eva tu* // There is a possibly significant variant here: the editions of *Kāśikā* and *Rathākara* read "*ātmalābhe ca*..." I have followed the editions of *ŚVTT* and the *Tattvasaṃgraha* (where *padas* a-b of our passage occur as *kārikā* 2847a-b). This is possibly significant since, according to Taber (1992), one of the important differences between Uṃveka and Pārthasārathimiśra concerns whether to read vv.47-8 as continuous (as Pārthasārathi does), or instead (with Uṃveka) to read v.48 as representing the answer to a different question. The reading "*hi*" (instead of "*ca*") recommends the former interpretation – which makes it interesting that our edition of Uṃveka is one of those that preserves the reading "*hi*," which seems not to recommend Uṃveka's interpretation. I am not sure, however, that Taber's appeal to this distinction represents the best case for what Taber wants to argue, i.e., that Pārthasārathi's interpretation is not only philosophically preferable, but also represents the best exegesis of Kumārila; for Pārthasārathi's commentary on Kumārila (the *Ratnākara*) in fact seems to differ quite a bit from his *Nyāyaratnamālā*, where he ventures the interpretation that Taber rightly identifies as significantly different from Uṃveka's. In fact, I am not sure I see an appreciable difference between Uṃveka and Pārthasārathi when looking just at the latter's commentary. Cf., n.97, below.

The *Bṛhaṭṭīkā* (as preserved in *Tattvasaṃgraha* 2850) provides an example that clarifies the point of the verse presently before us: *Mṛtpiṇḍadaṇḍacakrādi ghaṭo janmany apekṣate / udakāharaṇe tv asya tadapekṣā na vidyate* //. ("A pot depends, for its production, on a lump of clay, a potter's stick, wheel, etc.; but for carrying water, it has no need of these"). The same example is used by Sucaritamiśra in his comment on *codanā* 48 (cf., *Kāśikā*, p.90), as well as by Pārthasārathimiśra (*Ratnākara*, p.45). (References to the *Tattvasaṃgraha* are to the edition of Dwarikadas Shastri, 1968. Note that in the edition of Embar Krishnamacharya (1984-1988), from which Ganganatha Jha (1986) translated the text into English, the verse numbers differ by one from Shastri's edition, with Shastri's verse 2850 occurring as 2851 in the edition of Krishnamacharya and the translation of Jha.

[43] *codanā* 49-51: *jāte 'pi yadi vijñāne tāvan na-artho 'vadhāryate / yāvat kāraṇaśuddhatvaṃ na pramāṇāntarād bhavet // tatra jñānāntarotpādaḥ pratikṣyaḥ kāraṇāntarāt / yāvad dhi na paricchinnā śuddhis tāvad asatsamā // tasyāpi kāraṇe śuddhe tajjñāne syāt pramāṇatā / tasyāpy evamitiṭṭhaṃ ca* [variant: *tu*] *na kvacid* [variant: *kiñcid*] *vyavatiṣṭhate* //. The reading for 51a-b in *ŚVTT* makes no sense conceptually: *tasyāpi kāraṇe 'śuddhe tajjñānasya-apramāṇatā*, "there is *in*validity of that awareness given the *im*pure cause of that [subsequent awareness], too...."

on.[44] Or, as Kumārila here puts it, if the initial awareness isn't credited with the "capacity" for validity, then no other awareness will be able to bestow that – unless, of course, the second-order awareness is credited with intrinsic validity, in which case, why not simply allow this with respect to the initial moment? Here, the main part of the argument is completed, and the force of the charge of infinite regress becomes clear. The argument is, in effect, an appeal to common sense: if it is thought that we can only consider validity to obtain when we have justified ourselves in this by appeal to some other awareness, then we will never know anything at all; for the second-order awareness that justifies us in considering the first-order awareness valid would, in turn, require justification, and so on. As Kumārila's commentators like to put it, if it is thought that we must await second-order justification before considering first-order awarenesses valid, then "the whole world would be blind."[45]

As we will see in due course, there are some interpretive difficulties in these passages – and particularly in 47a-b ("The validity of all *pramāṇas* should be accepted as intrinsic"). For now, though, let us continue with Kumārila. In order for this critique to form the basis for a comprehensive epistemology – and in particular, for it to include the possibility of a robust conception of truth such as could disqualify the Buddha's speech – it is necessary for Kumārila to flesh out the account of *falsification*, which has so far been only implicit. Accordingly, Kumārila takes up the issue of falsification: "When validity is intrinsic, then nothing else need be sought; for falsity gives way without effort, based on non-awareness of faults. Therefore, *the validity of awareness is obtained by virtue [simply] of its consisting of awareness*, and is set aside by awareness of faults arisen from

[44] There is, from a Buddhist point of view, a somewhat similar argument in Nāgārjuna's *Vigrahavyāvartani* (*kārikās* 31-33); that argument begins: *yadi ca pramāṇatas te teṣāṃ teṣāṃ prasiddhir arthānām / teṣāṃ punaḥ prasiddhiṃ brūhi kathaṃ te pramāṇānām* // ("And if proof of all these objects is based on *pramāṇas*, then how could you say there was proof of these *pramāṇas*?").

[45] Cf., e.g. *Ratnākara*, p.45 (*āndhyam eva-aśeṣasya jagataḥ prasajyeta*); *ŚVTT*, p.56 (*āndhyam aśeṣasya jagata*). See also Pārthasārathimiśra's *Nyāyaratnamālā* (A. Subrahmanya Sastri 1982: 52), which gives *āndhyam eva-aśeṣasya jagato bhavet*. Cf., also, nn.55, 170, below.

the cause, or [by] the fact of being other than its object."[46] Here, what I want us to notice is the passage I have italicized, since this will be a particularly important text for the disagreement between Uṃveka and Pārthasārathimiśra. Note that here is another place where Kumārila alludes to Śabara. Recall that Śabara placed great emphasis on the fact that intelligible utterances *cause someone to be aware* (*avabodhayati*), with some six occurrences of variations on the verbal root √*budh*, "to be aware." Śabara's point was that, simply insofar as intelligible utterances produce some awareness, they are to be presumed valid.[47] Here, Kumārila suggests that the validity of awareness obtains *simply by virtue of the fact that it is awareness* (*bodhātmakatvena*).[48] We will see that this passage (which Pārthasārathimiśra adduces against Uṃveka) can play an important role in clarifying some of the interpretive difficulties in verse 47a-b of Kumārila's argument.

Kumārila continues: "Invalidity is divided three ways, according to falseness, non-[arising of] awareness, and doubt; the possibility of two of these, since they're positive entities (*vastu*), is based on a defective cause." Here we have an important response to the contention (attributed by Kumārila to his Buddhist interlocutor) that invalidity requires no explanation insofar as it is not a "positive entity" at all, but merely an *absence*.[49] The response here is that, in fact, two of the three kinds of invalidity that

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[46] *codanā* 52-3: *yadā svataḥ pramāṇatvaṃ tadā-anyo naiva gṛhyate* [variant: *mṛgyate*] / *nivartate hi mithyātvaṃ doṣājñānād ayatnataḥ // tasmād bodhātmakatvena prāptā buddheḥ pramāṇatā / arthānyathātvahetūtthadoṣajñānād apodyate //*

[47] Moreover, insofar as some such awarenesses – paradigmatically, the awareness (based on a Vedic *codanā*) that performance of the *agnihotra* sacrifice brings about heaven – cannot ever to be contradicted by any perceptual awareness, their *presumed* validity is taken by Mīmāṃsakas as *demonstrated*.

[48] One text that is useful for linking Kumārila's *bodhātmakatva* with Śabara's *avabodhayati*, etc., is an interesting little commentary on Śabara the date and author of which are uncertain: the *Śābarabhāṣya Vyākhyā Granthayojanā* (Sarma 1989). (Potter 1970 lists this as among the very few texts catalogued that is uncertain regarding both author and date. It must, however, be a rather late text, given the fully developed logical apparatus, which includes stylistic features such as the restatement of arguments as "*prayogas*" – that is, inferential syllogisms.) See pp.11-12. Here, for example, Śabara's anticipation of the objection that injunction "could speak falsely" is summarized as reflecting the view that "validity doesn't follow simply on being the cause of a cognition" (*na hi bodhakatvamātrānubandhi prāmāṇyam*); against which, according to this commentator, Śabara concludes that, in fact, it does: "Thus, validity depends simply on being the cause of a cognition" (*tena bodhakatvamātrādhīnaṃ prāmāṇyam*).

[49] Cf., verse 39 (n.34, above).

can obtain *are* "positive entities"; specifically, they are *cognitive events* (i.e., those of doubt, and of overriding awareness, or "falseness" as the verse elliptically puts it). In other words, it is here suggested that invalidity is something more than the mere *absence* of validity; rather, it *qualifies some awareness* – and specifically, a second-order awareness to the effect that a prior awareness was false, or that there are grounds for reconsideration. The third occasion for invalidity is simply the non-arising of awareness (as, for example, when an unintelligible utterance altogether fails to engender any cognition). With regard to this type, Kumārila is happy to concede: "But the operation of defects isn't posited at all when there's [simply] no [arising of] awareness, so, since there's no cause at all, [invalidity, in that case,] is proven for us just as for you."[50]

Kumārila must now address the suspicion that his appeal to *defects* makes him vulnerable to the same charge of infinite regress that he leveled against the proponent of extrinsic validity: "And given that, for the proponent of intrinsic validity, invalidity is based on a defect, there does not follow [any infinite regress] regarding defects, as [there does] in the case [where] awareness of efficacies [is held to be necessary for validity]. Rather, invalidity is easy [to ascertain] directly, based on contradictory awareness; for arising of the subsequent [awareness] is not proven by non-negation of the prior."[51] This passage essentially concerns the logic of falsification, and its point is structurally similar to Popper's point about falsification and scientific method: no matter how many supporting cases are adduced, a theory can never be *proven*, and is retained simply as

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[50] *codanā* 54-5: *aprāmāṇyaṃ tridhā bhinnaṃ mithyātvājñānasaṃśayaiḥ / vastutvād dvividhasya-atra sambhavo duṣṭakāraṇāt // avijñāne tu doṣāṇāṃ vyāpāro naiva kalpyate* [variant: *vidyate*] / *kāraṇābhāvatas tv eva tatsiddhaṃ nas tvaduktivat //*

[51] *codanā* 56-7: *doṣataś ca-apramāṇatve svataḥprāmāṇyavādinām / guṇajñānānavasthāvan na doṣeṣu prasajyate // sākṣād viparyayajñānāl laghvy eva tv apramāṇatā / pūrvābādhena na-utpattir uttarasya hi siddhyati //*. Sucaritamiśra (*Kāśikā*, p.92) rightly introduces the first of these two verses as answering this question: "But this regress also obtains, just as in the case of validity, when invalidity is being accepted as dependent on something else; for dependence produces the regress. So what's the difference?" (*Nanv iyam anavasthā prāmāṇya iva parāśraye 'prāmāṇye 'pi-iṣyamāṇe āpadyata eva; pāratantryaṃ hy anavasthām āpādayati. Ataḥ, ko viśeṣaḥ?*).

long as it is useful and avoids falsification; but it only takes one example to falsify the theory altogether.[52] Similarly, Kumārila here claims that the reference to (or dependence on) epistemic defects does not open a regress, insofar as there is, as it were, nothing "founded" on such defects; they function only to re-open the epistemic process by showing a need for revised judgment.

Moreover, there is no systematic incoherence insofar as potentially falsifying awarenesses (*bādhakajñāna*) themselves have only the same prima facie validity as any awareness, and can themselves be overridden: thus, when any of the possible overriders is found in what had prima facie presented itself as a falsifying awareness, the falsity of the latter obtains, and the validity of the first awareness is thereby restored;[53] but it remains the case that the potentially falsifying awareness, in the absence of any compromising deficiencies, is (like the initial awareness on which it bears) itself intrinsically valid.[54] Still, it might be objected that insofar as *any* awareness is always in principle potentially subject to future falsification, Kumārila's account of falsification leaves the epistemic process infinitely open, with something like an infinite regress of potential revisions. In regard to this objection, Kumārila and his commentators finally fall back on an appeal to common sense, urging that it is unreasonable to encourage doubt where no awareness of deficiencies explicitly raises one; for otherwise, as Sucaritamiśra puts it, "there would be the unwanted consequence of annihilating all worldly discourse."[55] Kumārila concludes: "Thus, a conception stronger than is born from three

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[52] On comparisons with Popper, see n.174, below.

[53] Cf., *codanā* 59c-d: *tadudbhūtau dvitiyasya mithyātvād ādyamānatā //.*

[54] Cf., *codanā* 60: *svata eva hi tatrāpi doṣājñānāt pramāṇatā / doṣajñāne tv anutpanne nāśaṅkā niṣpramāṇikā /*

[55] *Kāśikā*, p.95: *śaṅkā tu na-utprekṣāmātreṇa kartum ucitā, sarvavyavahārocchedaprasaṅgāt.* Cf., Kumārila's *Bṛhaṭṭikā* as preserved at *Tattvasaṃgraha* 2871: *Utprekṣyate hi yo mohād ajātam api bādhakam / sa sarvavyavahāreṣu saṃśayātmā kṣayaṃ vrajet //* ("For he who, out of delusion, posits an overrider even when none has arisen – he, being doubtful in all his worldly transactions, would go to ruin."). Cf., also, n.170, below.

or four awarenesses is not sought; [but any] one [awareness] intrinsically gains [its] validity prima facie (*tāvat*)."[56]

3.iv. Preliminary assessment: Just what kind of *capacity* are we talking about?

Having surveyed Kumārila's elaboration of *svataḥ prāmāṇya* as the basis for a comprehensive epistemology, let us try to summarize Kumārila's doctrine of intrinsic validity in such a way as to remain neutral with respect to some issues that can be seen as problems (these being the issues regarding which traditional interpreters of Kumārila will differ), while yet making clear *that* these problems are there. To this point, then, we have an epistemological doctrine according to which *validity* (understood in some way or another) is *in some important sense* intrinsic to ... well, what? There are, it seems to me, two options: validity could be intrinsic to all *veridical* awarenesses (i.e., all *pramāṇas*), or it could be intrinsic to *all awarenesses in general*, i.e., awareness as such. Both exegetically and philosophically, then, the heart of the matter (as, we will see, Pārthasārathimiśra understood) is Kumārila's *codanā* 47a-b, which I provisionally rendered thus: "The validity of all pramāṇas should be accepted *as intrinsic*." The italicized portion renders the first word in the verse, *svataḥ*. Significantly, this could also be read as meaning "from itself." One of the interpretive difficulties (or opportunities, as the case may be) is that the word *svataḥ* is an indeclinable form, made by affixing the adverbial / ablative suffix *–tas* to the reflexive word *sva*. Thus, it is very often be rendered adverbially ("intrinsically"), in which case, its reflexive sense is obscured. That *svataḥ* should, however, be taken as *reflexive to something* rather than adverbial is suggested by the problem with an adverbial *translation*. Thus, note that I have fudged

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[56] *codanā* 61: *evaṃ tricaturajñānajanmano nādhikā matiḥ / prārthyate tāvad eva-ekaṃ svataḥprāmāṇyam aśnute //.*

the adverbial sense, and rendered the passage as though this were an *adjective* ("as intrinsic"); for it doesn't work to translate "intrinsically," since, in that case, it's the *verb* (*gṛhyatām*, "should be accepted") that is modified – and surely Kumārila doesn't mean to say that it's the *acceptance of this account* that is intrinsic.

If, instead, we more literally render *svataḥ* in such a way as to disclose the word's reflexive sense, we read that "The validity of all *pramāṇas* should be accepted as *based on itself*." But based on *what* itself? One natural option would be to take *svataḥ* as reflexive to one of the other words in the verse, with *sarvapramāṇānām* being the obvious choice. In that case, the verse says, in effect, "The validity of all *pramāṇas* should be accepted as based on the *pramāṇas* themselves" – in other words, that validity obtains intrinsically with respect simply to all *veridical* awarenesses. But in this case, we would seem to be faced with a truism; for "validity" intrinsically obtains with respect to all "valid awarenesses" simply by definition.[57] On this account, then, the "intrinsic-ness" of validity obtains, as it were, simply *de dicto*. The other possibility, it seems to me, is that *svataḥ* is reflexive to something that is not explicitly stated in this verse – in particular, it is possible to understand *svataḥ* as reflexive *to any awareness whose status as a pramāṇa is in question*. On this reading, then, the verse posits that validity obtains intrinsically with respect to *all awarenesses, simpliciter* (since *any* awareness can be one whose truth-conduciveness we wish to confirm). We can, as I have indicated, find some warrant for this reading in Kumārila's verse 53a-b, which suggests that *the validity of awareness obtains simply by virtue of the fact that it is awareness* (*bodhātmakatvena*).[58]

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[57] That is, *prāmāṇya* obtains intrinsically merely in the trivial sense that it is a *taddhita* derivative from *pramāṇa*, to which it therefore attaches by definition.

[58] In this verse, of course, the word that I am rendering as "awareness" is *bodha*, while much of our discussion will focus instead on the word *vijñāna*. What significantly distinguishes *both* of these words, though, is that they refer simply to *awareness in general*, and not exclusively to *veridical* awareness (making it a problem, for example, to render either word as "knowledge," which is an equivalent frequently met with in the secondary literature). Thus, for example, both of these words can serve to refer to cognitive states of *doubt* (with Kumārila's commentators frequently asking whether a particular episode of *vijñāna* is *saṃśayātmaka*, "consisting of doubt," or *niścayātmaka*, "consisting of certainty") just as readily as they can refer to cognitive states of "knowledge." This, then, is the significance of Kumārila's rejoinder to his

It is, then, not immediately clear precisely *what* validity is intrinsic to (nor what, precisely, "validity" is). Whether or not this doctrine turns out to be tenable will depend to a great extent on how we decide to answer this question. Thus, we are faced with the need to clarify the following questions: What, precisely, does "validity" mean? In what sense, precisely, is it "intrinsic"? And, most of all, what, precisely, is it intrinsic to? All of these questions can, it seems to me, be seen in terms of the "capacity" (*śakti*) that Kumārila mentions in verse 47, where he said that "a capacity not already existing by itself cannot be produced by anything else." Just what kind of "capacity" is here on offer? The answer to this, obviously, will have much to do with what we take to be the *locus* of this capacity, which is what will be clarified for us when we have understood the reflexivity of '*svataḥ*.' And indeed, the divergent interpretations of Kumārila that are advanced by Uṃveka and Pārthasārathimiśra can be seen to turn on precisely this question.

A brief indication of how the question of the reflexivity of *svataḥ* relates to the question of "capacity" can be given by considering the possibility that *svataḥ* is reflexive to *sarvapramāṇānām* – i.e., the possibility that Kumārila is telling us that "the validity of all veridical awarenesses is based on the veridical awarenesses themselves." On this reading, the "capacity" in question would be the capacity for reliable warrants to be, well, *reliable*. Kumārila's "capacity," given this reading, turns out to function like a *virtus dormitiva*. The term *virtus dormitiva* comes from Molière, who, in *La Malade Imaginaire*, presents a doctor who attributes the soporific efficacy of opium to its *virtus dormitiva* (soporific quality). David Hume aptly exposes the vacuity of this kind of appeal: "It was usual with the Peripatetics ... when the cause of any phenomenon was demanded, to have recourse to their *faculties* or *occult qualities*, and to say, for instance,

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Buddhist interlocutor at verse 54, that, in fact, *aprāmāṇya is* a "thing" (*vastu*); for insofar as *aprāmāṇya* is definitely a quality *of some cognitive event*, it cannot be said to be a mere *absence*, since it qualifies a really existent mental episode.

that bread nourished by its nutritive faculty, and senna purged by its purgative...."[59] Clearly, this is not an *explanation*, it is simply a restatement of what requires explanation.[60] We are, I think, on the way to this kind of vacuous "explanation" if we take *svataḥ* as reflexive to "all *pramāṇas*," and Kumārila as therefore saying that "the validity of all *pramāṇas* is to be accepted as based on the *pramāṇas* themselves."

We are, then, likely to be off on the wrong foot if we think of the locus of Kumārila's "capacity" as the *pramāṇas* themselves – if we think, that is, that the "capacity" for producing validity (the capacity which, if not already existent, can't be brought about by anything else) is something like an occult "power" or metaphysical property that is intrinsically *possessed* by *pramāṇas*, which therefore intrinsically and objectively "bear" the means of producing the state of affairs which makes them valid. This is, it should be clear, basically to say we are off on the wrong foot if we take Kumārila to mean by *svataḥ prāmāṇya* something like the intrinsic *truth* of *pramāṇas*. And yet, this is how some important Buddhist critics of the Mīmāṃsaka doctrine have wanted to understand the claim. Śāntarakṣita and Kamalaśīla, for example, in characteristically Mādhyamika fashion, attack the Mīmāṃsakas for introducing a causal *entity* that cannot be coherently posited as either the same as or different from the possessor of that entity. Thus, the *śakti* adduced by the Mīmāṃsakas amounts, says Kamalaśīla, to something *svābhāviki* ("natural, "essential," etc.), and it must be asked whether this "essence" is the same as or different from the *pramāṇas* to which it belongs: "There are four possible positions: that (capacity) could be separate (from the *pramāṇa* to which it belongs), or it could be *not* separate, or it could have an essence that is both,

[59] Hume 1779: 223.

[60] For more on this idea, cf., Dennett 1991: 63. Dennett amusingly updates the example: "Just what is it about Cheryl Tiegs that makes her look so good in pictures? She's *photogenic*. So that's why!"

or neither."[61] Kamalaśīla here follows Śāntarakṣita's lead in assimilating Kumārila's word *śakti* ("capacity") to the class of things regularly refuted by Buddhists under the heading of *svabhāva* ("essence").[62]

As expected, given the standard Buddhist presentation of a tetralemma (*catuṣkoṭi*), the point is that, for Śāntarakṣita and Kamalaśīla, none of these four options can be sustained. In addressing these four possibilities, these critics of Kumārila follow Dharmakīrti's idea that there are only two possible kinds of relation between things: causal relations (*tadutpatti*), and the "relation" of identity (*tādātmya*).[63] Thus, it is here being argued that, by "*śakti*," the Mīmāṃsakas must mean some causally efficacious *thing*; for if it's not a *thing*, such that its relations to other existents could be explained, then it can't do the explanatory work of showing what *causes*, in this case, the "desired effect" (*iṣṭakārya*) of a *pramāṇa*, which is presumably what Kumārila wishes to explain in his verse 47. That the Buddhist critique here takes aim at a peculiarly occult and causal understanding of the "capacity" introduced by Kumārila is especially clear at the end of the long treatment of the Mīmāṃsaka doctrine in the *Tattvasaṃgraha*, with some of Śāntarakṣita's concluding verses amounting to a caricature: "But given the position of intrinsic validity, the Veda effects certainty by itself, simply given its own purpose and nature, and there's no possibility of mistake, etc. And hence, given that there's no room for ignorance, doubt, or misconception, the child of a Brahman needs no instruction at

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[61] Kamalaśīla, *Tattvasaṃgrahapañjikā* (Dwarikadas Shastri 1968: pp.905-6). Kamalaśīla is here commenting on Śāntarakṣita's *Tattvasaṃgraha*, v.2816 (or 2817, per Krishnamacharya 1984-1988 and Jha 1986), which goes: *Ity evam iṣyate 'rthaś cen nanu ca-avyatirekiṇi / śaktiḥ sarvapadārthānāṃ purastād upapāditā* ("If the meaning [of the word *śakti* in Kumārila's verse 47] is held in the way described, then surely the capacity of all things is separate [from them], which was previously (*purastād*) demonstrated"). Note, again, that the epistemological discussion of Kumārila is here again assimilated to the case of "all things" (*sarvapadārtha*) – that is, it is again ontologized in a way that may be problematic if we understand this as a strictly *epistemological* point concerning *awareness*.

[62] *Tattvasaṃgraha*, 2817: *Iṣṭakāryasamartham hi svarūpaṃ śaktir ucyate* ("For an essence [*svarūpa*] which is able [to produce] a desired effect is called a capacity"). While Śāntarakṣita's verse has "*svarūpa*," Kamalaśīla's commentary glosses this as *svabhāva*: *Kāryakaraṇasamarthā hi svabhāvaśaktis, tasya ca svabhāvasya bhāvātmatāyā abhāve sati, sa bhāvaḥ kārako na syāt* (Shastri 1968: 906).

[63] This point is the subject of Dharmakīrti's *Sambandhaparīkṣā* ("Examination of Relations").

all."[64] In other words, the "capacity" in question, if it is really to count as such and if it is to be properly "intrinsic," must be able to do its work *by itself* – in which case, children should need no instruction in the Vedas, whose intrinsic capacity for validity ought to suffice to transmit the text. This is, of course, a caricature designed to show that the position has been reduced to absurdity. Nevertheless, it is clear that this caricature gains its force from the presupposition of a peculiarly *causal* understanding of what it would mean to speak of the "capacity" of *pramāṇas*. On this view, then, the doctrine of intrinsic validity amounts to the claim that veridical awarenesses (*pramāṇas*) *possess* an occult capacity (*śakti*) that is able, by itself, to bring about actually existent states of affairs (such as the correspondence of awareness with its object – in this case, correspondence of awareness with the Vedas, even without instruction regarding the latter).

3.v. Uṃveka's causal account of *svataḥ prāmāṇya*

Significantly, of the commentaries on Kumārila that are now extant, the only one that would have been available to Śāntarakṣita and Kamalaśīla (mid- and late-eighth century, respectively) was that of Uṃveka Bhaṭṭa (fl. c.710), who is quoted by name in Kamalaśīla's commentary.[65] An awareness of the stock character of the critique advanced by Śāntarakṣita and Kamalaśīla should, to be sure, encourage us to be wary of accepting it as accurately representing the Mīmāṃsaka position. Nevertheless, it seems to me that

[64] *Tattvasaṁgraha* 3118-19: *svataḥprāmāṇyapakṣe tu niścayaṃ kurute svataḥ / vedaḥ svārthasvarūpe ca tan na mohādisambhavaḥ // ataś ca-ajñānasaṃdehaviparyāsāspade sthite / na-upadeśam apekṣeta dvijapoto 'pi kaścana //.* I will return to this passage at the end of this chapter, and will suggest that, at least given the best reconstruction of the Mīmāṃsaka argument, this caricature completely misses the point.

[65] *Tattvasaṃgrahapañjikā* (Shastri 1968: 912, ff.). Uṃveka is here referred to as "Uveyaka." Kamalaśīla's quotations are extensive, and are all drawn from Uṃveka's commentary on *Ślokavārttika, codanā* 47 (with the passages quoted by Kamalaśīla to be found at pp. 53-4 of *ŚVTT*). Throughout this chapter of the *Tattvasaṃgraha*, it seems to be particularly Uṃveka's exposition of *svataḥ prāmāṇya* that guides Śāntarakṣita and Kamalaśīla.

there is some basis in Uṃveka's commentary on Kumārila for the kinds of objections pressed by these Buddhist critics; for Uṃveka's is an eminently *causal* account of the doctrine of *svataḥ prāmāṇya*,[66] and I suggest that it is for this reason that, in the end, Uṃveka remains vulnerable to these objections.

Uṃveka's commentary on the relevant passages in Kumārila is much longer (and at several points, much more difficult and obscure) than those of Sucaritamiśra or Pārthasārathimiśra. Among the most noticeable differences between his commentary and the latter two is the very lengthy excursus that precedes Uṃveka's interpretation of Kumārila's verse 47. Interestingly, Uṃveka's commentary on this passage begins by canvassing what he takes to be alternative ways of interpreting the verse. Among the (mis)readings here canvassed by Uṃveka, we find this: "Still others think: The fact of producing awareness is, by definition, *prāmāṇya* (*bodhakatvaṃ nāma prāmāṇyam*); and that (fact) is simply intrinsic to awarenesses, it's not produced by efficacies, since there's also real existence [of the fact of producing awareness] in faulty awareness, which is lacking in efficacies; hence, validity is intrinsic."[67] This is interesting because, if (as Pārthasārathimiśra will do) we read Kumārila's verse 53 – according to which, *the validity of awareness obtains simply by virtue of the fact that it is awareness* (*bodhātmakatvena*) – as giving something like a definitive statement regarding *prāmāṇya*, then Uṃveka here seems to have in mind something like *Kumārila's* understanding of the matter.

Uṃveka explains what is wrong with what we could reasonably take to be Kumārila's interpretation: "This doesn't stand to reason, either, since validity isn't the

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[66] Schmithausen (1965: 258) agrees with this characterization of Uṃveka, laconically remarking, "Die Maßgeblichkeit aus sich besagt für Umbeka unter dem 'kausalen' Aspekt....." My understanding of Uṃveka also owes much to the analysis of Taber 1992.

[67] *ŚVTT*, p.50: *anye tu manyante: bodhakatvaṃ nāma prāmāṇyam, tac ca vijñānānāṃ svābhāvikam eva na guṇakṛtam, guṇābhāve 'pi viparyayajñāne sadbhāvād iti svataḥ prāmāṇyam.*

fact of producing awareness, owing to the real presence [of the fact of being an awareness] also in the awareness of silver with respect to [what is really] mother-of-pearl, which is not a veridical awareness (*pramāṇa*)."[68] What drives Uṃveka's critique of this interpretation, then, is his concern that it leaves us with no way of distinguishing veridical awareness from erroneous awareness, since the mere fact of producing an awareness (*bodhakatva*) is common to both *pramāṇas* and *apramāṇas*. For Uṃveka, then, the equation of validity (*prāmāṇya*) with "the fact of producing awareness" has the unwanted consequence that, if one mistook the glint of mother-of-pearl for that of a piece of silver (a stock example of error in Indian philosophy), this erroneous cognition would have to be credited as a "veridical awareness" (*pramāṇa*). The direction of Uṃveka's argument, as it were, is from *pramāṇa* to *prāmāṇya* (which, we will see, is reversed by Pārthasārathimiśra) – and he proceeds in this way because he thinks only thus can one explain the possibility of erroneous cognitions without the unwanted consequence of judging them valid.

That this concern motivates Uṃveka's interpretation is abundantly clear from the several pages that follow the last passage; for what Uṃveka now undertakes, before finally offering his own interpretation of verse 47, is a long excursus on the topic of various possible explanations of error. This should not be surprising; for Uṃveka, having himself written a commentary on Maṇḍanamiśra's *Bhāvanāviveka*,[69] was also familiar with Maṇḍanamiśra's *Vibhramaviveka* ("Discernment of Error"), an influential

[68] *ŚVTT*, p.50: *etad apy anupapannam, yato na bodhakatvaṃ prāmāṇyam, apramāṇe 'pi śuktikāyāṃ rajatajñāne sadbhāvāt*. Significantly, Uṃveka attributes precisely the same reasoning to the Buddhists: "But validity is [an awareness's] being non-discordant from its proper object; it's not [the mere fact of] being an awareness, since that [i.e., being an awareness] is common to both veridical awarenesses and their opposite" (*ŚVTT*, p.45: *prāmāṇyaṃ tu svālambanāvyabhicāritvam, na bodhakatvam, tasya pramāṇetarasādhāraṇatvāt...*). It should not be surprising that Uṃveka's position here involves the same logic; cf., n.92, below on the further extent to which Uṃveka here shares the logic of the Buddhists.

[69] Cf., Frauwallner 1938.

text on the topic.[70] This excursus on theories of error, it seems, is particularly meant to support Uṃveka's intuition that *prāmāṇya* has centrally to do with a *correspondence* theory of truth – or, as Uṃveka puts it when he returns from this excursus to the topic at hand, "the validity of *pramāṇas* such as perception is understood as their being non-discordant from their objects, not simply their producing awarenesses."[71]

This passage, finally, begins Uṃveka's statement of what he takes to be the correct reading of Kumārila's doctrine. That there are some eminently *ontological* presuppositions in play here is evident right away: "That is to say: there is invalidity in a case where there is no non-discordance, even given the fact of being an awareness, as (in the case) of an awareness of silver with respect to (what is really) mother-of-pearl. There is validity in a case where there is non-discordance with an object, *even without the fact of producing an awareness*, as (in the case) of smoke with respect to fire."[72] The last statement is particularly striking; for Uṃveka here quite clearly makes "validity" an eminently *objective, ontological* affair – not only as opposed to seeing it as a matter of (subjective) justification (which is what I will argue represents the best reading of the Mīmāṃsaka doctrine), but as completely detachable from *anyone's* knowing anything about it. Note, then, that this is among the places where it would seem that Uṃveka means by *prāmāṇya* something much more like *truth* – specifically, the ontological state of affairs of invariable concomitance, independent of any possible knower thereof.[73]

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[70] This is the text edited and translated by Schmithausen (1965). On the influence of Maṇḍanamiśra on Uṃveka, cf., Schmithausen 1965: 258-60.

[71] *ŚVTT*, p.53: *pratyakṣādīnāṃ pramāṇānām anvayavyatirekābhyām arthāvisaṃvāditvaṃ prāmāṇyam avagamyate, na bodhakatvamātram.* I have omitted from my translation the word *anvayavyatirekābhyām*, "based on positive and negative concomitance."

[72] *ŚVTT*, p.53: *tathā hi saty api bodhakatve yatra-avisaṃvāditvaṃ nāsti, tatra-aprāmāṇyam, yathā śuktikāyāṃ rajatajñāsya; vināpi bodhakatvaṃ yatra-arthāvisaṃvāditvam asti, tatra prāmāṇyam yathā-agnau dhūmasya.*

[73] This is among the passages from Uṃveka quoted by Kamalaśīla, and here, interestingly, Kamalaśīla refuses Uṃveka's apparent contention that no reference to a knowing subject is required in an account of *prāmāṇya*: "But since *awareness* is mentioned as the basis of the qualifier, validity, above all (*mukhyataḥ*), is not accepted as belonging to smoke, etc., which do not have awareness as their nature; hence, it's not established that validity is *only* the fact of non-discordance" (*kintu jñānam iti viśeṣaṇopādānād dhūmāder

Uṃveka continues, first stating what Taber rightly takes to be the view that most significantly distinguishes his interpretation of the doctrine: "The causes of the awareness are precisely the producers of that (i.e., of *prāmāṇya*)."[74] Here, then, we have a causal theory of validity, such that what causes an *awareness* is at the same time precisely what causes its *validity*. For Uṃveka, this is the sense in which validity is "intrinsic" – that is, insofar as the causal connection that ensures the "non-discordance" (*arthāvisaṃvāditvam*) of awareness from its object is what distinguishes a cognitive episode as veridical (i.e., as a *pramāṇa*), that same causal connection, ipso facto, explains the *validity* (*prāmāṇya*) of that *pramāṇa*. Uṃveka states this repeatedly over the course of a few paragraphs, emphasizing that, "based on positive and negative concomitance, given a properly three-fold inference, etc., the producer (*utpādaka*) of *awareness* is seen to be (the very same as) the cause of [its] validity."[75] He attempts, further, to argue that Kumārila says as much, too, though in different places: "[Kumārila] will show that the fact of being the cause of validity belongs precisely to the producer of awareness."[76] And he claims that this is the best interpretation of Śabara, as well, saying that Śabara "explains that the causes of awareness are the producers of validity."[77] Finally, he claims that this interpretation represents the best argument for the intended purpose of defending the validity of the Vedas: "And given the proof of that (i.e., given that the causes of awareness are at the same time the causes of its validity), validity is proven in the case of

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ajñānasvabhāvasya mukhyataḥ prāmāṇyaṃ na-iṣṭam ity arthāvisaṃvāditvamātraṃ prāmāṇyam asiddham; Shastri 1968: 831).

[74] *ŚVTT*, p.53 (immediately following the passage given in n.72, above): *tasya* [i.e., *prāmāṇyasya*] *jñānahetava eva-utpādakāḥ*.

[75] *ŚVTT*, p.54: *anvayavyatirekābhyāṃ tu vijñānotpādakam eva trairūpyānumānādau prāmāṇyotpādakaṃ dṛṣṭam*.

[76] *Ibid.*: *jñānotpādasyaiva prāmāṇyotpādakatvaṃ darśayiṣyati*. Uṃveka cites II.184-185a: *codanājanitā buddhiḥ pramāṇaṃ doṣavarjitaiḥ / karaṇair janyamānatvāl liṅgāptoktyakṣabuddhivat // pratyayotpādahetutvāt*.

[77] *Ibid.*: *bhāṣyakāro 'pi ... vijñānahetava eva prāmāṇyasya-utpādakā iti kathayati*

the Veda, too, because of the possibility of the causes of awareness[78] being producers of validity."[79]

Let us, finally, see how this all gets expressed particularly in Uṃveka's reading of Kumārila's verse 47, the resolution of difficulties in which, I have suggested, is central to our understanding of what Kumārila is up to. Uṃveka's close reading of this verse, then, goes like this:

> In this – i.e., [the verse that says] "*svataḥ sarvapramāṇānām*" – with the first half (of the verse), [Kumārila] has put forth the thesis that the causes of awareness operate in regard to its validity, too; with the next (part of the verse), the inferential cause (*hetu*) with respect to this (thesis) is explained to be the absence of any other collection of causal factors; "for a capacity not already existing by itself can't be effected by anything else," i.e., by anything over and above the causal factors relevant to awareness. And in this verse, the word "*sva-*" is expressive of something belonging to the [awareness it-]self.[80]

There are several things of note here. First of all, Uṃveka's explicit restatement of Kumārila's verse in syllogistic form provides a useful way of understanding what is going on here; for the syllogistic form requires that Uṃveka find in Kumārila's verse both a "thesis" (*pratijñā*), and a *reason* for accepting it – and, significantly, the word for the latter here is *hetu*, which literally means "cause," and is the same word Uṃveka uses to refer to the *causes* of awareness.[81] In the context of philosophical discourse, that is, *hetu* can signify the part of a syllogism which, as it were, *causes* one to perform the stated inference. One thing that Uṃveka does here, then, is to collapse the *causal* and the

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[78] With, we recall, Śabara having said that an injunction can't be said to be false insofar as it is the "cause of someone's being aware" (*budhyamānasya nimittam*).

[79] *ŚVTT*, p.54: *tatsiddhau ca jñānahetūnāṃ prāmāṇyotpādakatvasambhavāt, siddhaṃ vede 'pi prāmāṇyam.*

[80] *Ibid.*: *Tatra "svataḥ sarvapramāṇānām" iti pūrvārddhena vijñānahetūnāṃ prāmāṇye 'pi vyāpāra iti pratijñātam; uparitanena sāmagryantarābhāvas tatra hetur uktaḥ, "na hi svato 'sati śaktiḥ kartum anyena" vijñānasāmagryatiriktena "śakyate" iti. Śloke ca-ātmīyavācakaḥ svaśabda iti.* It should be noted that Uṃveka then proceeds to offer what seems to be an alternative reading, making it rather less clear that Uṃveka takes himself to be wedded to the account we are reviewing here.

[81] This use of the word *hetu* to denote the inferential "sign," "cause," or "reason" of a syllogism is standard, so Uṃveka is here exploiting an ambiguity that runs throughout the tradition of Sanskritic philosophical discourse.

epistemic senses of the word *hetu*, such that the *cause* of the awareness generated by his statement of this syllogism is at the same time the "cause" of its validity – that is, we might say, the *reason* for its being valid, with this move perhaps representing the conflation of what in contemporary Western philosophy would be the *causes* and *reasons*. Clearly, given Uṃveka's interpretation of the doctrine under consideration, this conflation of causal and epistemic factors is useful for him to exploit. In this regard, then, Uṃveka's account of the doctrine seems eminently to conform with – indeed, virtually to restate – Matilal's observation that "... a *pramāṇa* in the Sanskrit tradition is conceived as a combination of both evidence and causal factor.... it is both a piece of evidence for knowing something and also a cause, in fact the most efficient causal factor ... of the mental episode called knowledge."[82]

Secondly, note how Uṃveka glosses Kumārila's "by anything else" (*anyena*, as in, "for a capacity not already existing by itself can't be effected *by anything else*"): he takes it to stand for "anything over and above the causal factors relevant to awareness" (*vijñānasāmagryatiriktena*). Thus, while Kumārila's verse seems to suggest that a capacity not already existing by itself cannot be produced *by anything, simpliciter*, Uṃveka instead reads him as meaning that *only* the causes of awareness can produce this capacity – in which case, of course, our account of validity should retain some reference to these causes. And this is, of course, precisely the point; for Uṃveka's close reading of this verse has been preceded by a lengthy exposition on the nature of error, which supported Uṃveka's intuitions that "validity" ought to mean *correspondence* (or "non-discordance," *arthāvisaṃvāditvam*), and that this can only be guaranteed by a causal account – such that, for example, what distinguishes a veridical cognition of shiny silver from mistaking mother-of-pearl for such, is the fact that in the former case alone, silver is

[82] Cf., n.11, above.

"really there" as the *cause* of the awareness. Hence, "validity" (*prāmāṇya*) attaches uniquely to the former sort of episode – and that it attaches "intrinsically" is true simply by definition. For *prāmāṇya* just is what characterizes *pramāṇas* – and it is by reference to the *causes of our awareness* that we can know when awareness is veridical (that is, when it is a *pramāṇa*). Thus "validity," on this account, turns out to be the rather trivial result of our first distinguishing, by reference to causes, that an awareness is a *pramāṇa* – from which, *prāmāṇya* follows as a truism. This is precisely the procedure that Pārthasārathi will reverse.

Finally, what about Uṃveka's reading of the reflexive sense of *svataḥ*? In fact, all that his text says is that "the word *sva-* is expressive of [something] belonging to itself" (*ātmīyavācakaḥ svaśabda iti*). By itself, this is rather cryptic, though we can get some help from Pārthasārathimiśra (whom we will consult shortly), who clarifies what is at stake. As we will see, Pārthasārathi, explicitly distinguishing his own interpretation from that of Uṃveka, instead reads the word *sva-* as "expressive of [something] itself" (*ātmavācaka*), as opposed to Uṃveka's reading of it as referring to something ***belonging to*** itself. In fact, then, for both of these thinkers, the reflexivity here involves the implicit word *awareness*. Thus, the point of these different readings is that Pārthasārathi will take the word as reflexive *to awareness itself*, while Uṃveka instead takes it as reflexive to *something belonging to* awareness. John Taber very helpfully rephrases Kumārila's verse on Uṃveka's reading: "It is to be understood that the validity of all valid cognitions comes from the causes of the cognitions themselves (or, from the cognitions' *own* causes)."[83] While our gloss of his pithy statement thus involves the word "awareness," Uṃveka ends up, in fact, predicating validity only of *veridical* awarenesses (*pramāṇas*); for what belongs to awarenesses that are *pramāṇas*, what is their "own" (*ātmīya*), is just

[83] Taber 1992: 208. Cf., Pārthasārathi's gloss on Uṃveka (n.101, below): *Svīyād eva kāraṇāt tathābhūtārthaviṣayatvaṃ jñānasya jāyete* ("An awareness's being one whose object is an object existing thus [i.e., being *valid*] is arisen precisely from its own cause").

the right kind of causes! And non-veridical awarenesses (*apramāṇas*) do not have such causes belonging to them as their "own" (*ātmīya*). In other words, Uṃveka's is a causal theory of validity insofar as he holds that an episode of awareness is veridical (i.e., is a *pramāṇa*) if and only if it has the right sort of causal connection to the fact on which it bears; and, having thus determined simply by reference to its causes that an awareness is *veridical*, it is credited with *validity*.

In a way, then, validity is extraneous to this account, and Kumārila's verse cannot be taken as explaining anything about *pramāṇas*; for we can already get what we need (viz., a discrimination of veridical from non-veridical cognitions) simply by appeal to causes, and "validity" is simply the value that is assigned to those awarenesses that survive this discriminative appeal to causes. Thus, although our unpacking of Uṃveka's reading of the reflexivity of *sva-* involved reference to "awareness," it turns out to be the case that, for all practical purposes, he narrows the reference to veridical awarenesses alone. And this is because Uṃveka is concerned not with what may be the case *prima facie* (not concerned, that is, with how awarenesses may at first *appear* to us), but with what we end up with; for validity, on this causal account, is the resultant *effect* of the causes that are veridical awarenesses, and the real task is simply to determine, by appeal to causes, which are and which are not veridical awarenesses. This is why Uṃveka can take it as an unwanted consequence of Kumārila's interpretation that validity ends up being predicated of awarenesses that are not *pramāṇas*.[84] We can perhaps state this point more strongly by suggesting that, on Uṃveka's account of *svataḥ prāmāṇya*, "truth" turns out, in fact, to be a plausible rendering of *prāmāṇya* – and it would indeed sound absurd to speak of something's being prima facie *true*.

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[84] Cf., n.68, above.

3.vi. Excursus: William Alston's doxastic epistemology

It is at this point that I would like to introduce a contemporary interlocutor to the discussion. As will immediately be clear, the argument that William Alston develops in his *Perceiving God* has some significant affinities with the Mīmāṃsaka approach, at least as we have a general sense of that from Kumārila. What will be particularly helpful in Alston's project, though, is a sophisticated conceptual apparatus that will help us appreciate the difference between the interpretations of Uṃveka and Pārthasārathi (a difference, again, that has been very helpfully elucidated by John Taber). It is useful to introduce Alston at this point since not only will he provide some of the conceptual terms for my exposition of Pārthasārathi, but the elaboration of Alston's argument can also serve as the occasion for a philosophical assessment of Uṃveka's interpretation – with Uṃveka's interpretation, I believe, ending up compromising the central insights of Kumārila's idea.

The burden of Alston's *Perceiving God* is to defend the claim that putative experiences of God are significantly akin to *perceptual* experiences, and, as such, are capable of justifying beliefs about God in the same way, and for the same reasons, as, say, perceptual experience of a tree justifies one in beliefs about a tree. To say that experiences of God are significantly like perceptual experiences is mainly to make a phenomenological point: "... what I take to be definitive of perceptual consciousness is that something (or so it seems to the subject) *presents* itself to the subject's awareness as so-and-so – as red, round, loving, or whatever.... The agreement on my claim will be maximized if all parties are clear as to its purely phenomenological character. I am not saying at this point that this mode of consciousness is what perception *is*...."[85] Thus, Alston takes putative experiences of God to be like perceptual experiences largely insofar

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[85] Alston 1991: 36-7. Henceforth, page references will be given in the text.

as they have a similarly *presentational* quality – insofar, that is, as their subjects experience themselves as having something intrude upon their faculties from without. We will shortly see why it is significant that Alston here eschews a normative-explanatory approach in favor of a strictly phenomenological characterization – for his reversal of the usual epistemological procedure will, in the end, allow him to make a stronger claim based on this phenomenological observation.

Of course, one important reason for comparing putative experiences of God particularly with *sensory* perception is that the latter is widely (if often implicitly) held as setting the standard for providing justified belief[86] – and Alston wants to argue that experiences of God can reasonably count as such partly insofar as even sensory perception turns out not to be as self-evidently reliable as many have supposed. Alston's argument, then, is that *prima facie justification* is the most that we are ever in a position to claim even with respect to *sensory* perception, since any attempt to lay claim to something stronger (any attempt, for example, to mount a second-order *demonstration* of the fact that first-order perceptual events are reliable) inevitably issues in "epistemic circularity." Alston explains:

> For ascertaining contingent facts about the physical world we must either rely on sense perception or on some other source that we are entitled to trust only if we are entitled to regard sense perception as reliable.... Thus it is futile to try to assess the reliability of sense perception by a simple enumerative induction.... We must either use sense perception as the source of our premises, thereby already assuming that it is reliable, or else get our premises from some other source(s) that we would have reason to trust only if we already had reason to trust sense perception. Any such argument is infected by a kind of circularity. It is not the most direct kind of logical circularity.... Since this kind of circularity involves a commitment to the conclusion as a presupposition of our supposing ourselves to be *justified* in holding the premises, we can properly term it 'epistemic circularity.' (107-8)[87]

Alston considers several different attempts to argue, to the contrary, that the

[86] This observation is as relevant to Buddhist epistemologists such as Dignāga and Dharmakīrti as it is to recent Western philosophy.

[87] On epistemic circularity, see also Alston 1989: 319-349.

reliability of sense-perception can in fact be demonstrated. Among these, for example, is the verificationist hypothesis proposed by the logical positivists. Alston notes that this could be criticized (as it has been) by questioning the coherence of the very idea of factual meaningfulness, but his point here is specifically to show that the verificationist approach cannot demonstrate reliability *without epistemic circularity*. In this context, then, the relevant objection is that the very criterion invoked by verificationists "*presupposes* the by and large reliability of sense perception. What would be the point of requiring empirical *verifiability* or *confirmability* of p as a necessary condition of the factual meaningfulness of p unless it were possible to verify or confirm a hypothesis by relating it properly to the results of observation?" (111) In other words, according to the verificationist's own account, only a corroboratory *perception* could be counted as confirming the reliability of perception. The point, then, is not unlike one made by Kumārila's commentator Sucaritamiśra: "For if there is already awareness of a pot, what will one who is doubtful effect by *another* awareness of the pot?"[88] Alston has in effect noted here that we could take ourselves to be better justified by a second awareness of a pot only if we already presupposed that perceptual awareness grants justification; in which case, why not settle for the justification granted by the *first* awareness?

It is important to note (as Alston does) that he is "speaking in terms of epistemic *justification*, rather than in terms of *knowledge*" (2). Thus, "knowledge" is often taken to refer to something like "justified true belief." Such a notion seems to stipulate that one is only entitled to claim *knowledge* when one is both justified *and* capable of demonstrating (presumably on grounds other than those that provide justification) that the belief thus justified is also *true*; and it is precisely Alston's point that such a second-order demonstration cannot be mounted without at least presupposing the validity of the grounds that provided justification in the first place. In this regard,

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[88] *Kāśikā*, p.89: *Saty eva hi ghaṭajñāne jātāśaṅkaḥ kiṃ ghaṭajñānāntareṇa kariṣyati.*

> There is an important distinction between *mediate* or *indirect* justification and *immediate* or *direct* justification. To be mediately justified in believing that p is for that belief to be justified by *reasons*, that is, by other things one knows or justifiably believes. Here the justification comes via appropriate inferential or grounding relations.... To be immediately justified in believing that p is for that belief to be justified by something other than reasons. (71)[89]

To say, then, that "knowledge" is characterized as "justified true belief," is to suppose that one can not only be justified in crediting a first-order cognitive event, but that one can *know* that the belief thus justified is also *true* – and that one can know this by adducing as reasons "other things one knows or justifiably believes." And Alston's claim is that, insofar as these "other things one knows or justifiably believes" can only ever have the same degree of justification as the first-order event in need of warranting, the adducing of such reasons does not necessarily confer any greater justification – and certainly, it can never confer anything like *demonstrative certainty*. Thus, to recur to Śabara's example, it is a mistake to suppose that one could only be justified in crediting the awareness engendered by testimony (e.g., by hearing a sentence like "one desirous of heaven should perform a sacrifice") if one could demonstrate, on perceptual grounds, that it is true. Alston argues that this would, in fact, be a very significant mistake, since to allow that such second-order justification is required is, it turns out, to raise the bar too high even for seemingly uncontroversial perceptual beliefs.

Alston's argument, then, is that one can *be justified* even in cases where one is unable to *provide justification* – that is, first-order cognitive events can "immediately" provide a degree of justification that cannot (without epistemic circularity) be exceeded by the justification that is "mediately" conferred by the adducing of reasons, since such "reasons" can only ever amount to "other things one knows or justifiably believes"; and, since it is not possible to know something independently of the ways in which we know things, these "other things one knows" can only presuppose the validity of the same kind

[89] Alston's terms here are perhaps particularly well suited to a reading of Sucaritamiśra's interpretation of Kumārila, which I have not undertaken in detail here. Cf., though, n.105, below.

of first-order awareness now thought to need warranting. As Alston puts it,

> I will be working with the concept of a subject S's *being justified in believing that p*, rather than with the concept of S's *justifying* a belief. That is, I will be concerned with the *state* or *condition* of being justified in holding a certain belief, rather than with the *activity* of justifying a belief.... The crucial difference between them is that while to justify a belief is to marshall considerations in its support, in order for me to *be* justified in believing that p it is not necessary that I have *done* anything by way of an argument for p or for my epistemic situation vis-à-vis p. Unless I *am* justified in many beliefs without arguing for them, there is precious little I justifiably believe. (71)

Or, as Kumārila's commentators put it, unless it is possible to *be justified* in many beliefs without arguing for them, "the whole world would be blind."

Does Alston's argument, then, entail that we must abandon a robust conception of truth, and remain satisfied only ever to claim that what we justifiably believe *could* be true? Not necessarily. Here, it is important to be aware of the distinction between first-order and higher-order cognitive events. That is, the inescapability of epistemic circularity is not a problem once we realize that it obtains only at the level of second-order claims *about* knowledge; and this recognition entitles us to take the first-order beliefs as nonetheless reliable since, on Alston's theory of epistemic justification, "there are no 'higher-level' requirements for justified belief." (87) With respect, therefore, to the question of how Alston's epistemic reliability is related to the likelihood of a belief's being *true*, this important distinction between levels is what entitles us to assume our reliable practices to be "truth-conducive." That is, Alston can acknowledge that "we have finally settled for an epistemic status for [perceptual awareness] (and derivatively for the epistemic status of perceptual beliefs) that falls short of likelihood of truth"; and yet go on to emphasize that this reduced epistemic status "attaches to the *higher-level* claim that [perceptual awareness] is reliable, not to the particular perceptual beliefs that issue from that practice. As for the latter, what we are claiming is still the full-blooded (prima facie) justification ... that involves likelihood of truth." (181) And, as he adds in a footnote to this, "This does not, of course, imply that the higher-level claim is not justified in the

truth-conducive sense. It is just that we have given up on *showing* that it is." In other words, while we might not be able to *know that we know*, we are nonetheless justified in claiming to *know*.

And why is it that we are entitled to credit the first-order awarenesses as "truth-conducive"? It is with respect to this question that it becomes important to understand Alston's characterization of his as a *doxastic* approach to epistemology. "Doxastic" simply means "belief-forming," and Alston refers to all of the various ways of arriving at beliefs as "doxastic practices" (with, say, Christian practices for cultivating experience of God – or "Christian mystical practice," as he puts it – being, in this regard, on the same footing as "sensory practice").[90] What, then, does it mean for Alston to characterize his general epistemological approach as a "doxastic" one? Here, it is crucial to realize that his is a doxastic *as opposed to a causal* account of justification. *Causal* approaches to justification are, as Alston lucidly explains, elaborated in order to confer justification by explaining how an external object could be related to a subject, with the demonstration that an object is causally related to a subject being meant to satisfy us that the object in question is indeed what is perceived. This question of the relation between subject and object particularly emerged as a problem in the course of the history of modern philosophy. This is because the standard procedure in most post-Kantian philosophy has been to start with knowing *subject* (this was Kant's "Copernican revolution"), and to reason from the epistemic capacities of the subject to whatever it is one might be justified in believing. Accordingly, much post-Kantian epistemology has been concerned to bracket the question of exactly *what* it is one is perceiving in any given case (since that is, presumably, precisely what is in question), and to elaborate an epistemological account that remains neutral with respect to different possibilities for explaining what is perceived

[90] Indeed, "doxastic practice" would do very well as a translation of *pramāṇa*, when the latter is meant in the sense of a *means* of knowing or cognitive "instrument"; cf., n.6, above.

(neutral, e.g., with respect to sense-datum theories and other such representationalist epistemologies). But once attention had thus shifted to the knowing subject – once, that is, epistemology had emerged as "first philosophy" – it became difficult to explain how any external object *could* be related to the knowing subject, since the latter could, it seemed, be satisfactorily accounted for without any reference to external objects. It is to address this seemingly intractable problem that causal epistemologies are elaborated.

Of course, this is in significant ways similar to the problem that Uṃveka was concerned to address by appeal to causes. Uṃveka elaborated his account of *svataḥ prāmāṇya* on the assumption that one would have to retain some reference to the causes of cognitions if there were to be any hope of distinguishing veridical from erroneous awareness (that is, *pramāṇas* from *apramāṇas*); for surely the difference between a veridical cognition of shiny silver, and a mistaken cognition of mother-of-pearl as silver, is that silver is actually present as the cause of the awareness in the former case. Thus, for Uṃveka as for the thinkers against whom Alston argues, a true belief that *p* counts as "knowledge" only if it has the right sort of causal connection to the fact that *p*. But Alston quite effectively shows the problem with the appeal to such causal accounts of the relation between subject and object: "By no means everything that figures importantly in the causal chain leading to a certain visual experience is thereby seen. The chain in question contains neurophysiological processes in the brain and elsewhere; but they are not seen." (57) The problem, in other words, is how to specify *which* causes of awareness can count as the ones that explain *what* it is that one is aware of (which, indeed, *are* what one is aware of) – which puts us back in the situation of epistemic circularity, since we could only be in a position to specify this if we presuppose the reliability of our ways of picking out the relevant causes. To put the matter in terms of Uṃveka's example: given two phenomenologically indistinguishable awarenesses whose objects seem to us to be silver, we could only know which one was really *caused* by

silver if we presuppose the reliability of whatever awareness picks out the cause – but if we already knew *that*, then we wouldn't have any problem in the first place. There is, then, no sustaining the claim that awareness yields "knowledge" or "validity" only when it has first been ascertained that it was appropriately caused; for the knowledge that it was appropriately caused cannot be based on any fundamentally different *kind* of warrant than the initial awareness in question.

In contrast, Alston upholds a sort of "direct realism" that he designates the "Theory of Appearing." This "is a form of 'direct' realism, even 'naive' realism, in that it endorses our spontaneous, naive way of taking sense experience as involving the direct awareness of an object that is presented to consciousness, usually an external physical object."[91] Thus, "if we ask the question 'What must be added to a certain visual experience in order for it to be true that S sees a certain tree?', the answer given by the Theory of Appearing is 'Nothing, provided that tree is what is appearing to S in that experience.'" (56) Alston may seem to beg the question with this last condition ("provided that tree is what is appearing to S in that experience"), since, presumably, it is whether or not there is a tree that is precisely what we wish to know. That he is not begging the question, though, becomes clear when we notice that he is here again speaking only *phenomenologically*; that is, the condition specifies only that it be a tree that is *appearing* to the subject.

But (and here is where we can find room for stronger truth claims on Alston's account) the *phenomenological* fact that one is presented with a tree is, on Alston's doxastic epistemology, all that is required to be justified in believing the experience to be

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[91] Alston 1991: 55. Here, it is worth noting that Mīmāṃsakas are, in general, quite concerned to uphold a "direct realism" at all costs, particularly insofar as they are averse to characteristically Buddhist forms of representationalism. Taber (1992: 221) puts this aptly: "If 'innocent until proven guilty' sums up Mīmāṃsā theory of knowledge, then 'what you see is what you get' sums up Mīmāṃsā metaphysics." It is this concern that drives, for example, Mīmāṃsaka refutations of the Buddhist doctrine of *svasaṃvedana*, etc. Cf., e.g., *Ślokavārtika, pratyakṣa sūtra* 134, with Sucaritamiśra's commentary [*Kāśikā*, pp.258, ff.], where Kumārila's critique of *svasaṃvitti* has to do particularly with Buddhist accounts of perception. Cf., also, n.102, below.

one of a real, externally existent tree. It is in this regard that Alston has effected something of his own "Copernican revolution," precisely reversing the procedure that is characteristic of foundationalism. Thus, given the fact that epistemic circularity will attach to any attempt to demonstrate the reliability of a doxastic practice,

> the only way of arguing, from a standpoint outside any practice of forming beliefs ... that people do genuinely perceive God is to argue for the epistemological position that beliefs formed on the basis of such (putative) perceptions are (prima facie) justified. If that is the case, we have a good reason for regarding many of the putative perceptions as genuine; for if the subject were not often really perceiving X why should the experience involved provide justification for beliefs about X? This reverses the usual order of procedure in which we first seek to show that S really did perceive X and then go on to consider what beliefs about X, if any, are justified by being based on that perception. (10; cf., 68, 227)

In other words, Alston's procedure is to show that the subjects of religious experiences are prima facie *justified* in thinking their experience to *be* an experience such as it *seems*, phenomenologically, to be; and, if one is thus *justified*, then the experience can, ipso facto, be taken as genuinely an experience *of* what seems to be experienced. Thus, a doxastic approach to epistemology relates subject and object simply by holding that "what is seen by virtue of undergoing a particular experience is what this experience generates beliefs about." (57-8) We can express this reversal of causal epistemologies succinctly if we put it Sanskritically: whatever it is in regard to which one has *prāmāṇya* is what should be called a *pramāṇa*. Thus, while Uṃveka wants to explain *prāmāṇya* as what is caused by *pramāṇas*, Alston's procedure would instead have us work backwards from *prāmāṇya*, and hold that one may be said to have a *pramāṇa* in a case in which there is *prāmāṇya* – with it being the *latter* that is known first. Indeed, Alston's whole point is that, as it were, *prāmāṇya* is known *prima facie* (though it is subject to being overridden). This view has what Uṃveka considered the unwanted consequence that cognitive events that turn out not to have been veridical (that turn out, that is, to be *apramāṇas*) are credited with validity. But Uṃveka could consider this a problematic consequence only because he focused on the *conclusion* of the epistemic process; that is,

he wanted us to wind up *concluding* that we are in possession of validity, with this conclusion being the "effect" yielded by the causes that are *pramāṇas*.[92] If, in contrast, all we are talking about is *prima facie* justification, then validity represents not the conclusion but, as it were, the *beginning* of the epistemic process, with this prima facie validity providing the only way for us to proceed with anything (even to proceed, as in many cases, to conclude that the validity we had originally thought to obtain turns out to have been misleading). As Sucaritamiśra puts it, "This is why it is only after awareness has arisen on the part of all subjects that the activity of communication is seen (to take place). For even mistakenly cognized silver, just like correctly cognized silver, is seen conducing to effective action. This does not make sense on the part of a doubtful (awareness), so certainty (must be said to have) been produced. What validity could there be other than this?"[93] What more validity could there be, in other words, than that conferred by the prima facie justification on the basis of which any further inquiry (including epistemological inquiry!) must proceed?

This reversal of the usual procedure represents precisely the opposite of a foundationalist approach, which would seek to ground justification in a causal story that takes the perceived object indubitably to have *caused* the perception – which, that is, withholds the judgment that one "knows" something until it has first been ascertained that the "something" in question is in fact present as the cause of the cognition under review. But the problem, of course, is that the latter can only be ascertained by adducing "other things one knows or justifiably believes," which we can, in turn, only be justified

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[92] I am, then, attributing to Uṃveka a fairly serious tension; for in the course of elaborating the logic of the Buddhist position on the subject, Uṃveka says (quite rightly, it seems to me) that all the Buddhist seeks to establish is "validity's being an effect" (*ŚVTT*, p.45: *prāmāṇyasya kāryatvam eva sādhyam*). But his own position seems to me to involve the same logic – which should not be surprising, since, regarding Kumārila's definition of validity as having to do merely with the fact of awareness (*bodhātmakatvena*), Uṃveka attributes to the Buddhists precisely the same objection that he elaborates; cf., n.68 above.

[93] *Kāśikā*, p.89: ... *jñānotpatter anantaram eva sarvapramātṛṇāṃ vyavahārapravṛttir upalabhyate. Bhrāntisaṃviditarajato 'pi hi samyagrajatabodha iva arthakriyāyai ghaṭamāno dṛśyate. Tadasya saṃśayānasya na utpannam. Ato jāto niścayaḥ. Kim anyat prāmāṇyaṃ bhaviṣyati?*

in knowing based on the very same epistemic instruments now available to us as we seek to ascertain the presence of a cause. And this is, finally, Uṃveka's problem, too. For Uṃveka wants an account of *svataḥ prāmāṇya* according to which we can be certain that, for example, we will only ever credit with *prāmāṇya* an awareness of silver that was really caused by silver. This is why he concludes that validity is "intrinsic" to awareness only in the sense that what causes our awareness is at the same time what causes its validity. Thus, his account preserves the order of procedure that is reversed by Alston. On Uṃveka's account, that is, *prāmāṇya* turns out to be "intrinsic" only in the trivial sense that there is, by definition, *prāmāṇya* wherever one can first ascertain that a *pramāṇa* had been operative, with the latter to be determined by appeal to the causes of the awareness in question. But it can only be ascertained that it was "really" silver that caused the initial awareness if one already presupposes that one is in possession of valid ways of knowing this – which is precisely what was in question. Thus, Uṃveka's account of *svataḥ prāmāṇya* cannot, in the end, *explain* anything about the functioning of *pramāṇas*, since it simply ends up presupposing that we can already know when we have one – and only on the basis of knowing this, know, in turn, that *prāmāṇya* has been produced.

3.vii. Pārthasārathimiśra's doxastic account of *svataḥ prāmāṇya*

With Alston, we clearly have an account according to which we could understand the Mīmāṃsakas doctrine of *svataḥ prāmāṇya* as really concerned with prima facie *justification* or, as I will put it, prima facie *validity*.[94] On such an account, then, the locus

[94] I take the significance of both words to be that they refer to the specifically *epistemic* desiderata that entitle a subject to believe something – i.e., desiderata that are neutral with respect to truth (though far from *precluding* the possibility that truth is also involved, both words conventionally have some overlap with truth).

of Kumārila's "capacity" would be *awareness*; that is, it would not be that *pramāṇas* themselves objectively bear the means for ensuring that they result in *truth*, but rather, simply that they yield beliefs that appear valid to the subject, who is thus *justified* in acting on those beliefs as long as those beliefs are not overridden by subsequent beliefs. It would, then, be important for such a doxastic account that it clearly be talking not about something like *truth*, but about something more like (following Alston) *justification* or *validity* – although, insofar as this version of intrinsic validity was a specifically *doxastic* account (in Alston's sense), it would still remain possible for a robust conception of truth to go along with it. If we could find such an account in the Mīmāṃsaka tradition, we would have especially compelling grounds for disputing the unexplained translation, by Matilal and Mohanty, of *prāmāṇya* as "truth" – and, more to the point, a formidable doctrine that, insofar as it is misrepresented by Matilal and Mohanty (as well as by the Buddhist critics of Mīmāṃsā), turns out to be not nearly so easily dismissed as has often been supposed.

Of course, what I have wanted to argue all along is that there *is* such an account to be found in the Mīmāṃsaka tradition; specifically, that of Pārthasārathimiśra (fl. c. 1075). Pārthasārathi is the author of the *Nyāyaratnākara*, which is the commentary on Kumārila's *Ślokavārttika* that is perhaps most often used today.[95] This is, however, not all that interesting a commentary, even if its brevity and lucidity make it a useful aid in reading Kumārila. Far more interesting for our purposes is Pārthasārathi's *Nyāyaratnamālā*, an independent work which deals with most of the important philosophical themes of Pūrva Mīmāṃsā.[96] The second chapter of this work is entitled

[95] Thus, for example, Ganganath Jha's translation of the *Ślokavārttika* (1983) overlooks Uṃveka, including commentarial passages instead from Sucaritamiśra and Pārthasārathimiśra. Cf., also, Umesha Mishra's remarks that "the most important commentaries on the *Shlokavārttika* are the *Kāshikā* by Sucarita Mishra ... and the *Nyāyaratnākara* by Pārthasārathi Mishra," and that, since the extant manuscripts of the commentaries of Uṃveka and Sucaritamiśra are incomplete, Pārthasārathi's "is the only good and complete commentary which is available to us on the *Shlokavārttika*." (Mishra 1941: 26)

[96] A. Subrahmanya Sastri 1982. All references are to this edition.

"*Svataḥprāmāṇyanirṇaya,*" "determination of intrinsic validity." Here, Pārthasārathi dedicates most of his attention not to elaborating *svataḥ prāmāṇya* as contra Mīmāṃsā's Buddhist opponents (though his section on this is, we will see, quite illuminating); rather, he is particularly concerned to address the different understandings of the doctrine found *within* the Bhāṭṭa tradition of Mīmāṃsā, and to defend a novel account of that doctrine as not only making the most sense philosophically, but also as representing the best exegesis of Kumārila's text.[97] Let us see, then, whether his conclusion can aptly be expressed in terms of the conceptual vocabulary developed by Alston.

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[97] As he will put it, then, he is concerned to avoid both *nyāya-* and *grantha-virodha* (contradiction with reason and with the text). Interestingly, though, he ends up contradicting his own commentary on Kumārila! This raises what seems to me some vexing issues of intertextuality, which I do not have the space to explore, but which I would at least like to indicate.

In his *Nyāyaratnākara*, Pārthasārathi's reading particularly of Kumārila's verse 47 suggests an interpretation in important respects exactly like that of Uṃveka. Thus, Pārthasārathi, explaining why awareness's correspondence (*yathārthatvam*, "being like its object") need not be produced by epistemic efficacies (*guṇas*), argues that if this *were* the case, then nothing true at all would be cognized in cases where jaundiced eyes yield the perception that a white conch shell is yellow; for surely such awarenesses are based on "eyes and so forth that are devoid of efficacies, and conjoined with defects." But in fact, something true *can* still be gotten out of such cognitions; for one may still correctly perceive the *shape* of the conch shell. Pārthasārathi then uses this point to conclude (in terms reminiscent of Uṃveka) that "hence, an awareness's being like its object is caused by its own causes." (*Ratnākara*, pp.45: *yadi hi tannimittaṃ syāt tato guṇarahitād doṣayuktāc ca cakṣurāder upajāte pitaśaṅkhādijñāne na kiṃ cit satyaṃ gamyeta; gamyate tu tatrāpi śaṅkharūpādikaṃ satyam; ataḥ svakāraṇanimittam eva jñānasya yathārthatvaṃ, taddoṣanimittaṃ ca-ayathārthatvam / tathā hi sati pitaśaṅkhādijñānasya svakāraṇataḥ satyaviṣayatvaṃ taddoṣataś ca-asatyaviṣayatvaṃ yuktaṃ bhaviṣyati //*)

Interestingly, almost exactly the same reasoning is attributed by Pārthasārathi, in the *Nyāyaratnamālā*, to the opponent whose position resembles Uṃveka; thus, he has this opponent say "*Aprāmāṇyan tv ayathārthaviṣayatvalakṣaṇaṃ na sviyād eva kāraṇāj jāyate; api tarhi tadgatād doṣād iti parataḥ ity ucyate. Yadi hi satyārthaviṣayatā gunanimittā syāt, svakāraṇadoṣāt tv asatyaviṣayatā-eva, tathā sati, doṣayuktād gunahinād indriyādeh pitaśaṅkhādijñāneṣu jāyamāneṣu na kimcit satyam gamyeta; gamyate tu tatrāpi śaṅkhasvarūpādikam satyam*" (Sastri 1982: 43-4, with the underlined portions matching Pārthasārathi's commentary in *Ratnākara*). To be sure, it is not altogether clear, in the *Nyāyaratnamālā*, how important this example is to Pārthasārathi's (Uṃveka-like) opponent, nor that this is one of the parts of the latter position that Pārthasārathi means to criticize (though it seems like it is).

Nevertheless, it underscores how different is Pārthasārathi's reading of Kumārila in the *Ratnākara*. As far as I am aware, the attribution of works to Pārthasārathi is not a controversial matter, and it is fairly settled that the *Ratnākara* is possibly the last thing he wrote. It is possible, then, that he simply changed his mind – though this seems to me unlikely, particularly given the dramatic reversal this would represent. It is also possible that the philosophically pedestrian *Ratnākara* was, as it were, "phoned in" by Pārthasārathi, and that it simply wasn't his main philosophical statement. Still, I have a hard time keeping in abeyance my suspicion that something interesting is going on here....

In light of this difference, though, I am not sure that I would credit Taber's attempt to find the differences between Uṃveka and Pārthasārathi particularly reflected in their respective commentaries – as Taber does in emphasizing that Uṃveka sees Kumārila's verses 47 and 48 as discontinuous, while Pārthasārathi reads them together. (Cf., n.42, above.) Taber presses this point largely in the interest of suggesting that Pārthasārathi's interpretation of *svataḥ prāmāṇya* is not only philosophically preferable to Uṃveka's, but also represents the best exegesis of Kumārila – in regard to which, my own appeal to the internal logic of the tradition might be more promising. See below.

Pārthasārathi begins this chapter by very neatly laying out what he takes to be the contentious issues (the issues, that is, regarding which "commentators disagree"): "Is the word *sva-* reflexive to [awareness] *itself*, or to [something] *belonging to* itself? Similarly, does validity intrinsically *exist* (*bhavati*), or does it [intrinsically] *appear* (*bhāti*)? Finally, is what we call 'validity' the quiddity of an object, or is it the fact of effecting certainty that an object exists as it [really] does?"[98] He provides a succinct statement of the preferred answers to these questions in the form of a verse: "This word *sva-* is expressive of [the awareness it-]*self*; validity intrinsically *appears*; and validity is set forth as the *being thus* of an object."[99] The trend of Pārthasārathi's argument should already be clear from the first two points: the reflexive term in Kumārila's verse is taken to refer to *awareness itself*, and not beyond awareness to something belonging to it; and that the validity that thus attaches to awareness itself is in some sense prima facie is clearly suggested by the phenomenological language of "appearing" (as contra the ontological language of *existing*).[100]

Before he elaborates on what he means by this, though, Pārthasārathi first elaborates and refutes alternative readings. The first interpretation he considers is clearly

[98] Sastri 1982: 43: *Tatra vyākhyātāro vivadante: Svaśabdaḥ kim ātmavacanaḥ, ātmiyavacano vā? Tathā prāmāṇyaṃ kim svato bhavati, kiṃ vā bhāti; tathā prāmāṇyaṃ nāma kim arthatathātvaṃ, kiṃ vā tathābhūtārthaniścāyakatvam iti?*

[99] *Ibid.*: *Ātmavāci svaśabdo 'yaṃ, svato bhāti pramāṇatā / Arthasya ca tathābhāvaḥ prāmāṇyam abhidhiyate //.* This is the second "*kārikā*" of Pārthasārathi's chapter, the definitive points of which are thus stated in verse. But in fact, there are only four *kārikās* in the chapter, with the largest portion of the chapter given to unpacking this second verse vis-à-vis the different alternatives attested in the tradition.

[100] While I will be talking about this turn in the debate as essentially concerning prima facie justification or validity, it seems to me that Taber effectively makes the same point – i.e., that Pārthasārathi's notion of *prāmāṇya* is chiefly an *epistemic* notion – when he observes that "... *svataḥ prāmāṇya* is something essentially subjective for Pārthasārathi; it is a cognition's initial *appearance* or *manifestation* of validity...." (Taber 1992: 212). As for Pārthasārathi's third point here (i.e., that "validity" has to do with the "being thus" of an object): this is rather more difficult to distinguish from Umveka's similar claims regarding *arthāvisaṃvāditvam*, and may represent a point at which Pārthasārathi is in fact equivocating on the notion of *prāmāṇya* (cf., n.15, above). On an Alstonian interpretation of Pārthasārathi's argument, the upshot of this third point would be to emphasize that Pārthasārathi's account is compatible with a robust conception of truth – that, in other words, the epistemic notion of prima facie justification also involves "truth-conduciveness." If instead Pārthasārathi here means to be making a stronger point, it becomes difficult to reconcile this third commitment with what he will quite clearly go on to say in elaborating the first two commitments, and the charge of equivocation may become problematic.

that of Uṃveka, and he quite helpfully summarizes that reading in a way that introduces a complication that we have not so far encountered: "Therefore, validity, which is defined as [an awareness's] being like [its] object, is produced based on [awareness's] very own cause. It does not *appear* [intrinsically valid]; for awareness does not cause [one] to understand itself, nor its own validity, because of (awareness's) being exhausted in the mere illumination of an object."[101] The first statement should be familiar as an accurate representation of Uṃveka's interpretation. In attributing the second statement to his opponent (specifically, as "Uṃveka's" reason for rejecting Pārthasārathi's contention that validity merely *appears* intrinsically), however, Pārthasārathi has anticipated an important objection that we have not yet seen: specifically, the objection that Pārthasārathi's interpretation of *svataḥ prāmāṇya* compromises the direct realism to which Mīmāṃsakas are committed.[102] The point is that Mīmāṃsakas are committed to the view that awareness functions only to disclose external objects, with the Mīmāṃsakas having a peculiarly strong aversion to allowing for the possible involvement of anything like "sense data." Thus, Pārthasārathi here

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[101] Sastri 1982: 44: *Tasmāt sviyāt kāraṇād yathārthatvalakṣaṇaṃ prāmāṇyaṃ jāyate, na tu bhāti; na hi jñānam ātmānam, ātmīyaṃ vā prāmāṇyam avagamayati, arthaprakāśamātropakṣiṇatvāt.* Cf., also, the opening statement of this position (p.43), which clearly alludes to Uṃveka's commentary to *codanā* 47: *Prāmāṇyaṃ nāma arthāvyabhicāritvaṃ, tathābhūtārthaviṣayatvam iti yāvat. Tac ca jñānānāṃ svata eva jāyate. Svaśabdo 'yam ātmīyavacanaḥ.* [Cf., *ŚVTT*, p.54: *śloke ca-ātmīyavācakaḥ svaśabda iti.*] *Sviyād eva kāraṇāt tathābhūtārthaviṣayatvaṃ jñānasya jāyete....* In the latter passage, it is more clear that these definitions of *prāmāṇya* (i.e., *yathārthatvam* or *tathābhūtārthaviṣayatvam*) are taken by Pārthasārathi as qualifying *awareness*, notwithstanding Uṃveka's rather bizarre suggestion, at one point, that reference to awareness is completely unnecessary (cf., n.72, above).

[102] More specifically, the objection has to do with a specifically Mīmāṃsaka doctrine that represents a perhaps peculiar expression of the uncompromising realism of Mīmāṃsā: viz., the Bhāṭṭa Mīmāṃsaka contention that awareness is not "self-illuminating" (*svaprakāśa*), which contention particularly relates to the Mīmāṃsaka rejection of the *svasaṃvedana* (the "self-reflexive" dimension of awareness) posited by the Buddhist epistemologists. Wary of what they see as a slippery slope towards idealism, Mīmāṃsakas refused this Buddhist contention that awareness is necessarily self-reflexive, holding instead that one is aware *that* one is aware only by inferring this from the fact that something is known (inferring, that is, from *jñātatā*). The possibility that *svataḥ prāmāṇya* compromises this commitment was first noted by S. K. Saksena (1940). (This article is reprinted in Saksena 1970: 77-81.) Taber – who follows Saksena in addressing this charge (Taber 1992: 213ff.) – expresses the objection as being that if the validity of a cognition is *known* intrinsically, this "would appear to be to say that a cognition knows itself to be valid. In that case, it must *know itself*." Taber (rightly) sees this as a misguided objection, though he does not give much attention to the matter.

anticipates the objection that there are anti-realist implications to his reading of the doctrine of intrinsic validity; for his reading might seem to be predicated on the phenomenological claim that, insofar as awareness intrinsically "appears" (*bhāti*) as valid, it must have as its object *valid awareness itself.* As with the "self-reflexive awareness" (*svasaṃvedana*) posited by the Buddhist epistemologists, most Mīmāṃsakas would here see a point of ingress for a dangerous representationalism; for what is *intrinsic*, on this understanding of the claim, is "an inherent quality of truth of the cognitions"[103] – in which case, it is a short trip (by way of the intuition that "truth" consists in *arthāvisaṃvāditvam*, "non-discordance from an object") to the conclusion that the very *object* of awareness may as well be somehow intrinsic to the knower. Thus, Pārthasārathi clearly will want to show that this charge is misguided. With the example of Alston before us, it is not difficult to imagine how he can do so. Let us, then, look closely at how Pārthasārathi meets this objection, and elaborates an interpretation of *prāmāṇya* as intrinsically *appearing* – an interpretation that will finally make it clear that we cannot (as Matilal and Mohanty do) render *prāmāṇya* as "truth" without begging some key questions.

Here, I will condense somewhat Pārthasārathi's presentation, which first responds to the Uṃveka-like opponent with some less impressive arguments,[104] then to an alternative reading that resembles that upheld by Sucaritamiśra.[105] It is, however,

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[103] In the words of S. K. Saksena (1940: 27). Of course, as throughout this discussion, Saksena's translation of *prāmāṇya* as "truth" is significant, and the objection can be seen as largely misguided by precisely this presupposition. In concluding this chapter, we will have occasion to note that examples of this confusion are readily found in the works of Matilal and Mohanty, too.

[104] The whole chapter is, nevertheless, well worth reading, and (as noted in Chapter 1) I have appended a complete translation of it to the dissertation. See Appendix I.

[105] In my first attempt to grapple with this material (Arnold 2001a), it was particularly Sucaritamiśra's commentary that I relied upon, though I have come to think that Pārthasārathi's interpretation represents a much more natural ally for my reading. Sucarita's interpretation might plausibly be characterized as intermediate between those of Uṃveka and Pārthasārathi, and centrally involves Śabara's contention that "what is understood as determinate could not be false" (*niścitam avagamyamānam idaṃ mithyā syāt*; cf., n.22, above). Thus, Sucarita particularly focuses on instances where the resultant content of an awareness has "determinacy" or "certainty" (*niścaya*). In doing so, he argues particularly against those for whom *niścaya* could only ever be a *second-order* sort of function, holding instead that *niścaya* can be produced

interesting to note that, en route to the passages I will particularly emphasize, Pārthasārathi twice presses against Uṃveka a passage from Kumārila that we had occasion to note: *codanā* 53, which begins "*the validity of awareness obtains simply by virtue of the fact that it is awareness*."[106] Pārthasārathi rightly sees that this is a passage that Uṃveka cannot make much sense of, since, as we saw, Uṃveka explicitly refuses precisely this definition of validity. This is, then, part of what seems to me to be a fairly convincing case from Pārthasārathi that Uṃveka's interpretation is not exegetically

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"immediately" (in Alston's sense; cf., n.89, above). Thus, he argues: "We do not perceive a pot which has made contact with our senses (in such a way as to think,) 'this may or may not be a pot'; rather, awareness arises as essentially determinate, (such that we think,) 'this is a pot!' This is why it is only after awareness has arisen on the part of all subjects that the activity of communication is seen (to take place). For even mistakenly cognized silver, just like correctly cognized silver, is seen conducing to effective action. This does not make sense on the part of a doubtful (awareness), so certainty (must be said to have) been produced. What validity could there be other than this?" (*Kāśikā*, p89.: *Na hi syād vā ghaṭo na vā iti indriyasannikṛṣṭaṃ ghaṭaṃ budhyāmahe, api tarhi ghaṭa eva ayam iti niścayātmakam eva jñānam utpadyate. Ata eva jñānotpatter anantaram eva sarvapramātṛṇāṃ vyavahārapravṛttir upalabhyate. Bhrāntisaṃviditarajato 'pi hi samyagrajatabodha iva arthakriyāyai ghaṭamāno dṛśyate. Tadasya saṃśayānasya na utpannam. Ato jāto niścayaḥ. Kim anyat prāmāṇyaṃ bhaviṣyati?*) Pārthasārathi presents something like this interpretation at Sastri 1982: 45 (the passage beginning *Anye tv āhuḥ: anadhigatatathābhūtārthaniścāyakatvaṃ prāmāṇyam, tac ca jñānānāṃ svata eva jāyate*). As with the Mīmāṃsaka position more generally, there are good reasons for considering this interpretation to be framed specifically contra the Buddhists; cf., section 3.viii, below, particularly on the Buddhist notion of *pratyakṣapṛṣṭhalabdhaniścaya*.

It is generally held that Sucaritamiśra succeeds Pārthasārathimiśra chronologically (cf., e.g., Potter 1970, which gives Sucarita a date of c.1120). If this is correct, then he seems to have defended an interpretation that had already been upheld; for, among other things, we find in Kamalaśila's *Tattvasaṃgrahapañjikā* a critique of something very much indeed like Sucarita's point: "If it's suggested that that is a *pramāṇa* whose proper effect is the production of certainty, [we respond:] No, because sometimes there is doubt, and [sometimes] we see the contrary" (Shastri 1968, vol. 2: 933: *pramāṇam etad iti niścayajananaṃ svakāryam iti cen, na; kvacid aniścayād viparyayadarśanāc ca*). It is likely, however, that in fact the relative chronology with respect to Pārthasārathi and Sucarita needs to be reversed. Larry McCrea has brought to my attention a couple of references bearing on this. Thus, the Buddhist philosopher Jñānaśrimitra (whose date of c.1025 is thought to be fairly secure) at one point refers to the "author of the *Kāśikā*," in reference to a disputed position regarding the status of yogic perception (cf., Thakur 1987: 342.12-15). Lest we be in any doubt about the "*kāśikākāra*" thus referred to, Rāmakṛṣṇa's sub-commentary on Pārthasārathi's *Śāstradipikā* alludes to the same dispute, and specifically identifies a position similar to the one characterized by Jñānaśrimitra as "*sucaritamiśramataṃ*" (cf. Dharmadattasūri 1915: 53.20). Sucaritamiśra's elaboration of the view thus referred to can be found at *Kāśikā*, pp.57-58 (*ad Ślokavārttika, pratijñāsūtra* 126). Thanks to Larry McCrea for pointing these out to me.

Be that as it may, while Sucaritamiśra's approach – which thus focuses on the possibility that *niścaya* can, in Alston's terms, arise "immediately" (and therefore need not be thought to derive only from the mediated giving of second-order reasons) – strikes me as promising, he seems to me to compromise this position by, in the end, ontologizing his account in something like the same way that Matilal will do (cf., nn.159, 160, below). Cf., *Kāśikā*, p.90, where Sucarita adduces the example of medicine, which he argues can function only to help manifest a "capacity" for healing that was already present in the patient, since if the capacity were in the *medicine*, it would work equally for all who took it (*Ata eva naṣṭaśaktināṃ bheṣajabhedair api na pratikāraḥ; asati tu śaktis teṣāṃ api janyeta-eva, aviśeṣā*). On the basis of this, he concludes with a virtually *satkāryavādin* flourish: "Hence, all existents are produced, possessing capacity, by causes intrinsic to them" (*ataḥ sarve bhāvāḥ svahetubhyaḥ śaktimanto jātā eva*).

[106] Cf., n.46, above.

adequate to Kumārila's text (that Uṃveka, to put it Sanskritically, can be convicted of *granthavirodha*, "contradicting the text"), and it is not surprising to note that Uṃveka's commentary basically punts on this verse.[107] This is, for Pārthasārathi, an example of the "many verses" which "do not harmonize" given Uṃveka's interpretation.[108]

Pārthasārathi provides, moreover, an interesting statement of how Uṃveka would, given his interpretation, have to explain this verse, which goes on to say that the validity which thus obtains is only set aside "based on awareness of defects, or the [subsequently discovered] fact of being other than its object." On the view of invalidity proposed by Uṃveka, "such a verse would have to be explained by you (in this way): the validity of a conception is produced intrinsically, (and) overridden subsequently; and this doesn't make sense, because of [the awareness*'s* having been] a non-pramāṇa from the outset."[109] In other words, on the view that validity is intrinsically *produced* (i.e., by the same causes that produce the awareness), any subsequent revision in judgment about that (i.e., by way of the subsequent overriding of the initial awareness, as Kumārila here provides for) must consist in the actual transformation of the initial cognitive event – must consist, in other words, in the fact that the subsequent, overriding awareness actually renders *untrue* what had (really, ontologically) been *true*. Pārthasārathi is, in other words, saddling Uṃveka with the unwanted consequence that Kumārila's entire account of falsification, insofar as

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[107] Thus, Uṃveka's comment consists only in a statement of the objection he takes the verse to answer: "But if the effect of a *pramāṇa* is ascertainment; and (if) that (ascertainment) is just validity, i.e., the fact of consisting in awareness – then it obtains that awareness of silver with respect to (what is really) mother-of-pearl is also a *pramāṇa*. With that in mind, (Kumārila) said, 'Therefore...'" (*ŚVTT*, p.57: *nanu yadi paricchittiḥ pramāṇakāryam, tad eva ca bodhātmakatvaṃ prāmāṇyam, tadā śuktikāyām api rajatajñānaṃ pramāṇaṃ prāptam ity āha 'tasmād...' iti*). Thus, the objection is such that, for Uṃveka, the crucial part of the verse is the *second* part (i.e., concerning falsification), which he takes, in effect, to disavow the first part.

What *is* rather surprising is that Pārthasārathi, too, gives a rather underwhelming commentary on this verse (as does Sucaritamiśra), rather lamely explaining that Kumārila here simply "summarizes" (*upasaṃharati*). Cf., then, n.97, above, on the complex question of intertextuality as it pertains to this discourse.

[108] Sastri 1982: 45: *...bahavaḥ ślokā asmin pakṣe na saṅgacchante.*

[109] Sastri 1982: 46: "*Tasmād bodhātmakatvena prāptā buddheḥ pramāṇatā, arthānyathātvahetūtthadoṣajñānād apodyate*" – *iti śloko 'pi bhavatā itthaṃ vhākhyeyaḥ – buddheḥ svato jātaṃ prāmāṇyaṃ paścād apodyata iti; tac ca-ayuktam, utpattāv eva-apramāṇatvāt.*

it is superfluous on Uṃveka's account, can only be retained by becoming absurd. This is not surprising, since Uṃveka's position was that only those awarenesses that we already know (by appeal to other, causal criteria) to be *pramāṇas* should be credited with *prāmāṇya* – in which case, Kumārila's provision for the subsequent falsification of initially "valid" awarenesses must consist not (as Pārthasārathi would have it) in the reversal of a judgment of merely prima facie validity, but in the ontological transformation of the first awareness.

Against this, Pārthasārathi urges that, in cases where (as provided for by Kumārila) our initial awareness is falsified, the initial awareness was false (i.e., was a non-*pramāṇa*) all along; all that changes is *our awareness* thereof. This is one expression of a recurrent theme running throughout Pārthasārathi's treatment of the subject in this chapter, viz., the parallel questions: *which are the epistemological and which the ontological issues*, and *which judgments are a function of first-order and which a function of higher-order cognitions*. Pārthasārathi argues (quite rightly, it seems to me) that to hold that validity is intrinsic is to hold that "there would be infinite regress only if validity is dependent on *awareness* of efficacies; but when [validity] is dependent on efficacies themselves, then even uncomprehended efficacies, like those of the senses, produce the validity of awareness, and there is no consequence of infinite regress"[110]; while to hold that invalidity is dependent is to hold that "invalidity is based on *awareness* of defects, not on the defects themselves."[111] In other words, the "validity" that Pārthasārathi has in mind has to do with the full-blooded sort of correspondence (as he puts it, the "*being thus* of an object," *arthasya tathābhāva*) that is really produced by efficacious causes; all that's in question is our *awareness* thereof, with its being claimed

[110] Sastri 1982: 44: *Guṇajñānādhine hi prāmāṇye syād anavasthā. Guṇasvarūpāyatte tv anavagatā eva guṇā indriyavaj jñānaprāmāṇyaṃ janayantīti, na-anavasthāpattiḥ.*

[111] Sastri 1982: 45: *siddhānte doṣajñānād eva-aprāmāṇyaṃ, na doṣasvarūpād iti vyaktam evāha.*

only that we can never *demonstrate* (without epistemic circularity) that this obtains; hence, we have no choice but to credit our awarenesses with the veridical quality that they seem, prima facie, to have. In contrast, we are only justified in overruling this prima facie validity when we become positively *aware* of something that compromises it, so that we do require some second-order awareness of defects if we are to revise our initial judgments. It is precisely this asymmetry that provides Pārthasārathi with the basis for a robust conception of truth. This is, it seems to me, precisely the point we saw Alston make: "The lower epistemic status we have settled for attaches to the higher-level claim that SP is reliable, not to the particular perceptual beliefs that issue from that practice. As for the latter, what we are claiming is still the full-blooded (prima facie) justification ... that involves likelihood of truth .... This does not, of course, imply that the higher-level claim is not justified in the truth-conducive sense. It is just that we have given up on *showing* that it is."

We arrive, then, back at Pārthasārathi's deferred response to the charge that his interpretation has anti-realist implications. Pārthsārathi is here worth quoting at length, as his response is crucial to a full appreciation of what he is up to:

> In regard to this, it is explained: First of all, as for what you said – "Awareness doesn't apprehend itself, because of its consisting (only) in the disclosure of an object; and when (awareness) is not itself being apprehended, validity can't be apprehended as being connected to it" – if we were saying that awareness apprehends by saying 'I am a *pramāṇa*,' or 'validity belongs to me,' then we could be censured as you say. But this is not what we said.[112]

Pārthasārathi here restates the objection, clarifying that his interlocutor thinks that the validity of an awareness cannot intrinsically appear as part of the awareness if the latter does not also disclose itself. (Uṃveka would then go on to say that it must therefore be the case that validity is intrinsically produced, such that it can obtain even in the absence

[112] Sastri 1982: 47: *atra-abhidhiyate: yat tāvad uktaṃ "na jñānam ātmānaṃ gṛhṇāti, viṣayaprakāśātmakatvāt; na ca-ātmany agṛhyamāṇe tatsaṃbandhitayā prāmāṇyaṃ śakyate gṛhitum" iti: yadi vayaṃ jñānam 'ahaṃ pramāṇam' ity evaṃ, 'madiyaṃ vā prāmāṇyam' ity evaṃ gṛhṇāti-iti vadem, tadā-evam upālabhyemahi. Na tv evam asmābhir ucyate.*

of an apprehended awareness – in the same way, we saw him say, that "Where there is non-discordance with an object even without the fact of being an awareness, there there is validity, as in the case of smoke with respect to fire.") Pārthasārathi rejoins: this objection only has any purchase if it is presupposed that validity can only be predicated as the *outcome* of (what is already known to be) a veridical awareness – in which case, it would indeed be necessary first to distinguish which awarenesses were already veridical (and hence, entitled to have validity predicated of them), and Pārthasārathi would need some basis for so distinguishing. Insofar, then, as he is talking simply about the intrinsic *appearance* of validity, he would be forced to hold that, phenomenologically speaking, veridical awarenesses simply announce themselves as such ("I am a *pramāṇa") –* that, as it were, they wear their epistemic credentials on their sleeves, initially appearing to us as already suitable (or not) for predication of validity. Pārthasārathi responds with the phenomenological point that, of course, awarenesses *do not* appear to us as thus announcing their finally veridical status, and that this is not what he is saying. He will be saying, rather, only that awarenesses "appear" (*bhāti*) such that we are *prima facie* justified in crediting them with validity – in which case, it is precisely the point that we are thus prima facie justified whether or not the awarenesses in question turn out to have been veridical. Again, then, Pārthasārathi disagrees with Uṃveka regarding whether validity is found at the *outcome* of the epistemic process, or at the beginning, with Pārthasārathi being under no compulsion immediately to specify whether or not the awarenesses that are prima facie credited with validity are, in fact, veridical; for the prima facie judgment of validity merely begins the process, which is subject to revision (subject, that is, to falsification) in light of subsequent, overriding awarenesses.

Pārthasārathi explains:

> What, then, (is being said)? That which is actually the validity of awareness, that in virtue of which an awareness becomes a *pramāṇa* – that, which is what is expressed when the word '*prāmāṇya*' is perceived, *by virtue of its* [i.e.,

> *prāmāṇya*'s] *being the motivator of the concept and the word 'pramāṇa,'* is said to be apprehended by awareness itself.[113]

Particularly in the parts I have italicized, what Pārthasārathi here provides is, in effect, a gloss on the word "*prāmāṇya*" that suggests that, like Alston, he has completely reversed the usual epistemological procedure (has reversed, that is to say, *Uṃveka's* procedure). That is, Pārthasārathi here explains veridical awareness (i.e., awareness that is a *pramāṇa*) by the prior, prima facie fact of validity (*prāmāṇya*), rather than the converse. Thus, Uṃveka worries that we must first be sure that, say, only a "genuine" awareness of silver (as contra an awareness that mistakes mother-of-pearl for silver) is credited with validity – and hence, holds that we must have some other, causal grounds for distinguishing the veridical from the erroneous awareness, and then credit the former's validity as obtaining "intrinsically" only in the sense that a veridical awareness is valid by definition. Pārthasārathi instead starts from the fact that we are prima facie justified in taking either awareness – i.e., either the "genuine" awareness of silver, or the one that mistakes mother-of-pearl for silver – as valid (with its being possible, of course, that a subsequent awareness will override this judgment). Thus, if, absent the arising of any overriding awareness, the prima facie justification holds, then the initial awareness stands as veridical (as a *pramāṇa*) *in virtue of the fact that it was valid.* This is what it means for Pārthasārathi to say that the concept of validity (*prāmāṇya*) is "the motivator of the concept and the word '*pramāṇa*'" (*pramāṇabuddhiśabdayor bhāvakatayā*), and that it is in virtue of this that an awareness becomes a *pramāṇa* (*yadvaśāj jñānaṃ pramāṇaṃ bhavati*). It is, then, validity understood in this way – understood, that is, not

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[113] *Ibid.*: *kiṃ tarhi? Yad vastuto jñānasya prāmāṇyaṃ, yadvaśāj jñānaṃ pramāṇaṃ bhavati, tat pramāṇabuddhiśabdayor bhāvakatayā labdhaprāmāṇyapadābhidhāniyakam ātmanā-eva jñānena gṛhyata ity ucyate.* Emphasis added. Pārthasārathi's commentator (Śrī Rāmānujācārya, whose commentary, the *Nāyakaratnam*, is printed in Sastri's edition) provides a helpful gloss on the words "*bhāvakatayā labdhaprāmāṇyapadābhidhāniyakam*": *bhāvakatayā: nirūpakatayā, nimittatayā-iti yāvat. Labdhaprāmāṇyapadābhidhāniyakaṃ: "prāmāṇyam" iti padena labdham abhidheyakam ity arthaḥ.* (Sastri 1982: 48.) Note that Pārthasārathi's emphasis on what is "actually" (*vastutas*) validity may again represent a point at which his notion of *prāmāṇya* is rather more than simply epistemic; cf., nn.15, 100, above.

as *truth* (not as the *outcome* of the epistemic process), but as *prima facie justification* (hence, as the *basis* for the epistemic process) – that is involved in what is "apprehended by awareness itself." Thus, the phenomenological content of awareness need not include the second-order awareness *that* it is veridical (i.e., the self-reflexive awareness which announces that "I am a *pramāṇa*"); rather, the point is simply that awareness presents itself to us as disclosing some object or state of affairs, and we are justified in taking it as doing so veridically.

Pārthasārathi concludes this passage by asking precisely what it is that, under the name "validity," thus drives the concept of veridical awareness:

> And what is that? The quiddity of an object (*arthatathātvam*); for it is precisely the fact of its object's really existing in this way (*arthasya tathābhūtatvam*) which is the validity of an awareness, i.e., because of the validity of an awareness whose object exists in that way. And it is precisely (an awareness's) being-otherwise than its object (*arthasya-anyathātvam*) which is its *in*-validity. Therefore, validity, in the form of the quiddity of an object, belonging to [the awareness it-]self, is ascertained *based on the awareness itself.* It is not to be understood based on awareness of efficacies, or of correspondence (*saṃvāda*), or of pragmatic efficacy (*arthakriyā*). But *in*-validity, in the form of (awareness's) being otherwise than its object, is not understood intrinsically, i.e., as belonging to [the awareness it-]self; rather, it's based on awareness of a defect in the cause, or based directly on awareness such as 'this [thing I'd previously perceived turns out to be] not so.' This is how, in regard to this, it is settled.[114]

Here we see, first of all, that Pārthasārathi, like Alston, still has some basis for a robust conception of truth, which, as a good realist, he clearly conceives as something like *correspondence* (i.e., the fact that an awareness's object really exists in the way presented); it's just that we are justified in thinking such correspondence to obtain whenever "the validity of awareness that obtains simply by virtue of the fact that it is awareness" is not falsified by any subsequent overriding awareness.[115] We do not, that

[114] *Ibid.: kiṃ punas tat? arthatathātvam. idam eva hi jñānasya prāmāṇyaṃ yad arthasya tathābhūtatvam. tathābhūtārthasya jñānasya prāmāṇyāt. idam eva ca-aprāmāṇyaṃ yadarthasya-anyathātvam. Tena svata eva jñānād arthatathātvarūpam ātmiyaṃ prāmāṇyaṃ niścyate. Na tu guṇajñānāt, saṃvādajñānāt, arthakriyājñānād vā tadavagantavyam. Aprāmāṇyaṃ tv ātmiyam arthānyathātvarūpaṃ svato na-avagamyate. Tat tu kāraṇadoṣajñānāt, sākṣād eva vā "na etad evam" iti jñānād avagamyata ity etad atra pratipādyate.*

[115] Here, of course, I quote Kumārila's verse 53a-b, and paraphrase c-d.

is, require any second-order awareness to confirm the validity that we're thus prima facie justified in assuming, and the prima facie justification can nonetheless be taken as truth-conducive. Higher-order awareness is, on the other hand, required in order to *override* such justification.

After adducing several passages from Kumārila's works in order to show that the interpretation thus defended is, in fact, the one upheld by Kumārila, Pārthasārathi provides further clarification regarding some of the other issues that I indicated were left open by Kumārila's statement of the doctrine in his verse 47, and drives home the point that I have been taking him to make. He starts by anticipating an objection that once again mistakenly presupposes the standard order of epistemological procedure:

> But if validity is understood at the time of the arising of awareness, [then] that which does not appear as being a *pramāṇa* at the beginning is a non-*pramāṇa*; hence, at the very beginning, it can be ascertained by elimination, even without overriding cognitions or cognitions of defects in the cause; hence, there would be the unwanted consequence that *in*-validity, too, is intrinsic.[116]

Clearly, this objection ignores Pārthasārathi's earlier point, and the interlocutor is still guided by the presupposition that we can only speak of the *effect* that is validity after we have ascertained the *cause* that is veridical awareness – in which case, the prima facie appearance of validity must amount to awareness, *ab initio*, of which are and which are not the veridical awarenesses that are entitled to *bear* this prima facie judgment. The objection, in other words, is again that if the epistemic process is held to be *initiated* by awareness simply insofar as this intrinsically *appears* as valid, then we are left with no way to distinguish veridical from erroneous awarenesses; and, hopelessly wedded to the assumption that judgments of validity imply ascertainment of veridical awareness, the objector concludes that we therefore do not, after all, require second-order awarenesses for falsification, since whatever does not initially appear as a *pramāṇa* (which, again, is

[116] Sastri 1982: 49: *nanu yadi prāmāṇyam jñānotpattisamaye 'vagmyate, yad utpattau pramāṇatayā na cakāsti, tad apramāṇam iti, utpattāv eva pariśeṣān niścetuṃ śakyaṃ vināpi kāraṇadoṣabādhakapratyayābhyām iti, aprāmāṇyam api svata eva-āpadyeta.*

all that this objector will allow as warranting the judgment that *validity* obtains) is, ipso facto, a non-*pramāṇa*. Hence, invalidity, too, would be intrinsic.[117]

We have already seen that such an objection, insofar as it is guided by precisely the presupposition that Pārthasārathi means to question, fundamentally misunderstands Pārthasārathi's claim. In the present statement of the objection, though, Pārthasārathi finds the occasion for a compelling clarification of the last of the issues that I had said would require our attention. Thus:

> Don't speak thus! For this word "*sva-*" is not used with *validity* as its referent, [in which case] validity [would] appear simply based on validity. Nor is it [used] with *pramāṇa* as its referent; for if it were thus, then, since validity doesn't appear in non-*pramāṇas*, invalidity would be proven by elimination. Rather, this word "*sva-*" is reflexive to *awareness*.[118] ***Validity appears simply because there is awareness (vijñānād eva prāmāṇyam bhāti). And thus, validity is experienced, even though itself non-existent, even based on an awareness which is not a pramāṇa***; hence, there is not proof-by-elimination of invalidity. But *in*-validity is experienced subsequently, by way of the form of a cognized exception to validity.
>
> And this reflection on whether the validity of pramāṇas is intrinsic or dependent is not [simply] with reference to awarenesses that are *pramāṇas*; rather, those that are based on awarenesses that are in contact with more than one mutually exclusive extreme, such as (awarenesses whose content is) "is this a post or a man?", and those that are redundant because of being memory awarenesses,[119] and those whose forms are like "this is a pot, this is a cloth" – this reflection is with reference to all of these awarenesses, because [Kumārila] begins [this whole project] by saying "This, ***whose object is all awarenesses***, is to be investigated."[120]

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[117] In which case, the position would be reducible to the absurdity that is held to apply to the Sāṃkhya contention that both validity *and* invalidity are awareness – viz., the absurdity that either, (a), a single awareness could have predicated of it two mutually exclusive properties, or, (b), it is simply the case that *some* awarenesses are intrinsically valid, and *others* intrinsically invalid – in which case, there is no way to tell which is which.

[118] This, finally, is the upshot of Pārthasārathi's contention, contra Uṃveka, that *sva-* is reflexive to (awareness) *itself* (*ātmavāci svaśabdo 'yam*), and not to something *belonging to* (awareness) (*ātmiyavācaka*, as Uṃveka himself put it). Given the importance of this distinction, then, I cannot agree with Mohanty (1966: 5), who says, "Pārthasārathi Miśra in his Nyāyaratnamālā mentions two meanings of the word '*svataḥ*' which may mean either 'what is related to oneself' or simply 'from oneself'.... It seems to me that the distinction does not introduce anything new and so may be overlooked for our purpose."

[119] It is a commonplace of Indian philosophy that a *pramāṇa* is defined, in part, by its yielding *new* information; hence, memory is not accepted as a *pramāṇa* by any Indian school of philosophy, and thus serves Pārthasārathi's purpose as an example of an awareness that no one accepts as a *pramāṇa*.

[120] Sastri 1982: 49: *maivaṃ vocaḥ. na hi svaśabdo 'yaṃ prāmāṇyaparatayā prayuktaḥ prāmāṇyād eva prāmāṇyaṃ bhāti-iti. nāpi pramāṇaparatayā. yadi hi tathā syāt, tato 'pramāṇeṣu prāmāṇyānavabhāsāt pariśeṣasiddham aprāmāṇyaṃ syāt. vijñānaparas tv ayaṃ svaśabdaḥ. vijñānād eva prāmāṇyaṃ bhāti-iti. tataś ca-apramāṇajñānād api prāmāṇyam eva-ātmano 'sad api bodhyata iti, na-aprāmāṇyasya pariśeṣasiddhiḥ. aprāmāṇyan tu pratītaprāmāṇyāpavādarūpeṇa paścād bodhyate. Na ca*

Here, then, in addition to concluding with yet another good passage showing his exegetical adequacy to Kumārila, Pārthasārathi finally clarifies why we *must* take the reflexive *sva-* in Kumārila's verse ("the validity of all reliable warrants should be understood as based on [awareness] *itself*") as reflexive to *all awarenesses* – i.e., even those that turn out not to be veridical. Pārthasārathi here canvasses three options, according to the first of which we would have the trivial statement that "the validity of all reliable warrants should be understood as based on *validity* itself." More importantly, he considers the possibility that *sva-* is reflexive only to all *veridical* awarenesses (i.e., only to *pramāṇas*). This, Pārthasārathi here points out, is precisely what is assumed by the objection he is here addressing. That is, it only makes sense to think that there is a problem with reading Kumārila's doctrine as essentially concerning *prima facie justification* if it is presupposed that the prima facie justification thus argued for could attach only to *veridical* awarenesses (if it is assumed, that is, that *validity* must be understood as what is *yielded* by a veridical awareness); for only on this assumption are we forced to conclude that, insofar as validity could not be yielded by *non*-veridical awarenesses, we would not need any falsifying awareness to show invalidity.

This amounts, in other words, to the assumption that talk of the prima facie appearance of *validity* must, ipso facto, entail the claim to know, prima facie, when we are dealing with a *pramāṇa*, with non-*pramāṇas* being simply whatever awarenesses are left over as not thus wearing their validity on their sleeves. But Pārthasārathi's claim, of course, is precisely that there *are no* awarenesses which could thus be "left over" as the remainder that is invalid by default; rather, the whole point is precisely that we are justified in crediting *all* awarenesses as having (prima facie, at least) validity. Thus,

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pramāṇajñānāny adhikṛtya cintā-iyaṃ pramāṇānāṃ prāmāṇyaṃ, svataḥ parato vā-iti. kiṃ tarhi, yāni tāvat "sthāṇur vā puruṣo vā"-iti parasparopamardakānekakoṭisaṃsparśijñānebhyaḥ, smṛtijñānebhyaś ca-atiriktāni "ghaṭo 'yaṃ paṭo 'yam" ity evaṃrūpāṇi jñānāni, tāni sarvāṇy adhikṛtya cintā-iyam. "sarvavijñānaviṣayam idaṃ tāvat parikṣyatām" ity upakramāt.

Pārthasārathi now tries, against his interlocutor's stubborn refusal to appreciate that Pārthasārathi has completely inverted the logic of conventional epistemology, to foreclose the possibility of any further mistaking his point, which is clearly stated in the passages I have italicized: "*Validity appears simply because there is awareness. And thus, validity is experienced, even though itself non-existent, even based on an awareness which is not a pramāṇa.*" Pārthasārathi could not state any more clearly than this that, as John Taber puts it, "*svataḥ prāmāṇya* means that whenever a cognition occurs it *presents itself as true*."[121] This is, in other words, the phenomenological claim that we generally experience our awareness as presenting us with an accurately represented world. This is so, Pārthasārathi here quite clearly emphasizes, even when a subsequent awareness overrides this justification, and shows that the validity which obtained prima facie turns out, in fact, not to have been present.

And, just as in Alston's argument, this phenomenological point is, by way of an essentially doxastic epistemology, coupled with the realist claim that, though *no* belief-forming practice can be *shown* to be reliable, we are nonetheless entitled to consider ourselves justified in thinking ourselves to experience, in fact, what we *seem* to ourselves to experience. That is, a doxastic epistemology is one which claims that, simply insofar as we *experience* our awareness this way, we are *justified* in taking it as such. As Alston says in sketching a "Theory of Appearing" that meshes quite well with the uncompromising realism of Mīmāṃsā, "if we ask the question 'What must be added to a certain visual experience in order for it to be true that S sees a certain tree?', the answer given by the Theory of Appearing is 'Nothing, provided that tree is what is appearing to S in that experience.'" (*Perceiving God*, p.56) Pārthasārathi's persistent interlocutor, stubbornly refusing to get the point, would take this last phrase as begging the question,

[121] Taber 1992: 210.

insofar as he would insist that whether or not there is a tree (or silver!) there is precisely what is in question. But note that Alston and Pārthasārathi have made only a *phenomenological* point: provided that tree is what is *appearing* in the experience. The doxastic epistemologies of Alston and Pārthasārathi then contend that this *doxastic* relation to a tree (or silver, etc.) – that is, the fact that one experiences oneself as *related* to a tree simply by virtue of the fact that it is a *tree* regarding which one arrives at some belief – is sufficient explanation of the fact that one is, as a knowing subject, related to a really existent external object. And any attempt to *demonstrate* that this justified belief is, in fact, *true*[122] – any attempt, for example, to show that the belief really was *caused* by the tree – will necessarily result in epistemic circularity, since any such attempt can only gain any purchase on the matter if it is presupposed that our second-order awareness of the first awareness's cause is valid.

We have seen that, like Alston, Pārthasārathi thus reverses the standard epistemological procedure – a reversal that is clear in his contention that *pramāṇas* are to be explained by *prāmāṇya* (that, in other words, *prāmāṇya* is the "motivator of the concept and the word '*pramāṇa*'"), rather than (as is typical) the converse. Shortly, I will adduce an especially compelling passage from Pārthasārathi, which shows that the doctrine of intrinsic validity *must* be understood as thus reversing the standard procedure, if the goal that drives the whole Mīmāṃsaka project (viz., that of securing the validity of the Vedas) is to stand any chance of getting off the ground. But that passage will, perforce, return us to the question (which I have so far bracketed) of the Mīmāṃsaka appeal to the transcendence of the Vedas. But as we have one more fish to fry before doing so, let us first summarize: On Pārthasārathi's interpretation, Kumārila's "*svataḥ prāmāṇya*" is *not* to be understood as anything like "intrinsic truth"; rather, it is to be

[122] Here, then, cf., Potter 1984.

understood as concerning *prima facie justification.* Since Uṃveka thinks that *prāmāṇya* is something that can only be claimed at the *end* of the epistemic process, he thinks it's necessary to supplement the doctrine of intrinsic validity with a theory of error – i.e., such that he can explain, on grounds other than the doctrine of intrinsic validity (and, as we have seen, it is *causal* grounds he opts for), how it is that we are disqualified from claiming *prāmāṇya* in cases of erroneous awareness. But if, as Pārthasārathi understands, the doctrine of intrinsic validity is seen as really a doctrine of *prima facie justification* (and if, therefore, *prāmāṇya* is thought, as it were, to *begin* the epistemic process), then the whole doctrine of intrinsic validity *just is* a way of discriminating veridical from erroneous awareness without appeal to anything beyond the awarenesses in question; for this is the role of subsequent, overriding awarenesses, etc. – with it possible, as we saw Pārthasārathi rightly indicate, for Uṃveka only to suppose either that such falsifying awarenesses are superfluous, or, absurdly, that they operate by literally transforming an initially "true" cognition into a false one. Thus: this point about the "direction" of their respective arguments – whether, that is, from *pramāṇa* to *prāmāṇya*, or from *prāmāṇya* to *pramāṇa* – is key to understanding why Uṃveka thinks he needs a theory of error, and why Pārthasārathi, seeing *svataḥ prāmāṇya* as simply prima facie justification, already has one.

3.viii. "Mīmāṃsā has only one real enemy: Buddhism."[123]

Now that we have devoted so much attention to a philosophical and exegetical disagreement among Mīmāṃsakas who claim to share a commitment to the doctrine of intrinsic validity, it remains for us to consider how the doctrine we have explored

[123] Sheldon Pollock (1990: 342n.), reporting the view of a "famous contemporary Mīmāṃsaka."

(especially on the Alstonian interpretation that I have defended with respect to Pārthasārathimiśra) can be read particularly as a critique of *Buddhist* epistemology. Mīmāṃsaka tradition leaves no doubt that it is the Buddhists who are thought to uphold precisely the opposite view (viz., that it is *in*-validity that is intrinsic, while demonstration of validity requires appeal to something else), which is the one of the four possible positions on the subject that Kumārila elaborates at greatest length before turning to his own view.[124] Moreover, Buddhists (or at least, those writing subsequent to Kumārila and Uṃveka) knew this attribution, too. Thus, Kamalaśīla's commentary to the *svataḥ prāmāṇya* chapter of the *Tattvasaṃgraha* lays out the same fourfold scheme[125] – and, while Kamalaśīla here presents the positions without attributing them, he subsequently makes clear that he knows it is the "extrinsic validity" position that is attributed to the

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[124] A typical statement of the traditional attribution of these four positions is to be found in the *Sarvadarśanasaṃgraha* of Mādhava (14th century): "The Sāṃkhyas rely on validity and invalidity both being intrinsic, the Naiyāyikas (take) the two as extrinsic; the Buddhists say the last (i.e., invalidity) is intrinsic, and the first, i.e. validity, is extrinsic, and the proponents of the Vedas say that validity is intrinsic and invalidity is extrinsic" (*pramāṇatvāpramāṇatve svataḥ sāṃkhyāḥ samāśritāḥ / naiyāyikās te parataḥ saugatāś caraṃ svataḥ // prathamaṃ parataḥ prāhuḥ prāmāṇyaṃ, vedavādinaḥ / pramāṇatvaṃ svataḥ prāhuḥ parataś ca-apramāṇatām //*) (Ānandāśrama Sanskrit Series 1928: 106-7; interestingly, among the handful of passages quoted from Kumārila in this text's chapter on the "Jaiminidarśana" is *codanā* 53, which Mādhava, like Pārthasārathi, thus seems to take as definitive). Cf., also, the statement found in Vaidyanātha's 18th-century commentary on Śabara (the *Prabhā*), which is printed with Abhyankar's edition of Śabara: "The Sāṃkhyas say it is ascertained that the validity *and* invalidity of awareness is intrinsic; the Logicians (i.e., Naiyāyikas) say that both (validity and invalidity) are (determined) by cause, quality, deficiency, and so forth (i.e., are determined extrinsically); the Buddhists say (there is) intrinsicness of invalidity, and external-dependence of validity; but the Mīmāṃsakas say (that) validity is intrinsic, and invalidity is dependent" (Abhyankar 1976: 16: *Jñānasya prāmāṇyam apramāṇyaṃ ca svata eva nirṇīyata iti Sāṃkhyāḥ. Ubhayam api kāraṇaguṇadoṣādinā iti Tārkikāḥ. Aprāmāṇyasya svatastvaṃ prāmāṇyasya ca paratastvam iti Bauddhāḥ. Prāmāṇyaṃ svato 'prāmāṇyam eva parata iti tu Mīmāṃsakāḥ*). See also the various places in the commentaries of Uṃveka and Sucaritamiśra where they make clear the Buddhist character of the *parataḥprāmāṇyapakṣin* – e.g., *Kāśikā* 86.6, *ŚVTT* 45.5.

In this regard, G. P. Bhatt (1962: 145) makes the obvious (and loaded) comparison: "The Naiyāyika is like a judge who sees every man appearing in his court with an unprejudiced eye and the Bhāṭṭa [Mīmāṃsaka] is like one who believes that every man is innocent until his crime is proved. But the attitude of the Buddhist is just the opposite of the Bhāṭṭa [Mīmāṃsā] attitude. He is like a judge who takes every man to be a criminal until the proof of his innocence is available." Interestingly, Alston (1991: 153) at one point invokes essentially the same image: "Thus we will follow the lead of Thomas Reid in taking all our established doxastic practices to be acceptable as such, as innocent until proven guilty. They all deserve to be regarded as prima facie rationally engaged in (or 'acceptable', as we shall say), pending a consideration of possible reason for disqualification...."

[125] Ad. verse 2811: *Tathāhi catvāraḥ pakṣāḥ sambhavanti: kadācid ubhe 'pi prāmāṇyāprāmāṇye svata eveti prathamaḥ, kadācit parataḥ eveti dvitīyaḥ, prāmāṇyaṃ parato 'prāmāṇyaṃ tu svata eveti tṛtīyaḥ, etadviparyayaś caturthaḥ.* (Shastri 1968: 903) For the second *pakṣa*, Shastri follows the earlier edition of Krishnamacharya (1984-1988) in reading *kadācid aparataḥ*; this must be incorrect, though I have been unable to check the Tibetan.

Buddhists.[126]

It is, to be sure, important to note that Kamalaśīla (and many Buddhist philosophers writing after him) refuses this attribution. As he says: "But having laid out these four positions, with the predication of deficiency (particularly) rendered regarding the third (i.e., Buddhist) position, there is nevertheless no harm whatsoever of the Buddhist; for not a single one of these four positions is accepted by the Buddhists, since they accept a position without restriction. That is to say, in some cases both are intrinsic, in some cases extrinsic, as was previously explained [i.e., elsewhere in the *Tattvasaṃgraha*]. That's why the presentation of the fourfold position doesn't make sense, since there's the possibility of a fifth, unrestricted position."[127] Elsewhere in the same chapter, Kamalaśīla indicates precisely which *pramāṇas are* accepted by Buddhists as intrinsically valid: "Some *pramāṇas* are admitted by the Buddhists as intrinsically (valid); for example, self-reflexive perception, the awareness of yogins, awareness of pragmatic efficacy (*arthakriyājñānam*), inference, and habituated perception (*abhyāsavat pratyakṣam*) – (in the latter case), because this is ascertained *intrinsically*, since the (inherently) mistaken cause is mitigated by the force of repetition. Other (*pramāṇas*) are otherwise (i.e., extrinsically valid), such as the awareness produced by injunction, whose authority is produced (only) by debate, as well as perceptions whose delusive causes are not set aside, since these are not pervaded either by awareness of pragmatic efficacy, or by repetition."[128]

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[126] Thus, he has his Mīmāṃsaka *pūrvapakṣin* ask the Buddhist *siddhāntin* why he accepts *parataḥprāmāṇya*: *yadi bhavatāṃ na vivādaḥ kathaṃ tarhi parataḥprāmāṇyam abhyupagatam*... (Shastri 1986: 909). Of course, Kamalaśīla knows this because he has read Kumārila and Uṃveka, who first "invented" this whole presentation of the matter, so Kamalaśīla's knowledge of this attribution should not necessarily be taken to reflect a more widely held tradition contemporaneous with him, even though it eventually became such.

[127] Shastri 1986: 981: *yat tu pakṣacatuṣṭayam upanyasya pakṣatraye doṣābhidhānaṃ kṛtam, tatrāpi na kācid bauddhasya kṣatiḥ* [emended, per Shastri, from *kṛti*]; *na hi bauddhair eṣāṃ caturṇām ekatamo 'pi pakṣo 'bhiṣṭo 'niyamapakṣasya-iṣṭatvāt. Tathāhi ubhayam apy etatkiñcit svataḥ kiñcit parata iti pūrvam upavarṇitam. Ata eva pakṣacatuṣṭayopanyāso 'py ayuktaḥ, pañcamasya-apy aniyamapakṣasya sambhavāt*

[128] *Ibid.*: 938: *taiḥ* [i.e., *bauddhaiḥ*] *kiñcit svataḥ pramāṇam iṣṭam, yathā svasaṃvedanapratyakṣaṃ yogijñānam arthakriyājñānam anumānam abhyāsavac ca pratyakṣam; tad dhi svata eva niścīyate,*

Nevertheless, notwithstanding these Buddhist protests, there are in fact good reasons for thinking that Buddhists (particularly those, such as Kamalaśila, who stand in the epistemological tradition of Dignāga and Dharmakirti) can aptly be characterized as holding that the validity of *pramāṇas* is extrinsic – though it may require a bit of reconstruction to see this, since Kumārila and his commentators do not seem to me to give the best reasons for so understanding the Buddhist position. Recall that Kumārila represents the Buddhists as arguing that *in*-validity is best understood as the mere ***absence*** of validity, and that it is therefore only validity, as a positively existing "entity," that requires any special explanation – with its mere absence being, as it were, the default setting. It is perhaps possible to relate this argument to what seem to me the more important points,[129] but I think the significant motivation underlying Buddhist accounts is

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abhyāsabalena-apahastitabhrāntikāraṇatvāt / kiñcid anyataḥ, yathā vivādāspadibhūtaṃ codanājanitaṃ jñānam pratyakṣaṃ ca-anapagatabhrāntinimittam, abhyāsārthakriyājñānayor anavāptatvāt.

See also, inter alia, Manorathanandin's commentary on Dharmakirti's *Pramāṇavārttika* (ad. 1.3): "But a perception whose object is pragmatic efficacy *intrinsically* consists in experience of pragmatic efficacy; there is not, in regard to this, dependence on the pragmatic efficacy of something else. Hence, this (kind of perception), too, has its validity ascertained intrinsically, which is why it's difficult to establish (the charge of) infinite regress based on following the series of pragmatic efficacy" (in Pandeya 1989: 2: *arthakriyānirbhāsaṃ tu pratyakṣaṃ svata eva-arthakriyānubhavātmakaṃ, na tatra parārthakriyāpekṣyata iti tad api svato niścitaprāmāṇyam; ata eva-arthakriyāparamparānusaraṇād anavasthādoṣo 'pi duḥstha eva*). Cf., also, this passage from Mokṣākaragupta's *Tarkabhāṣa*: "But that's why the validity of perception is intrinsic. But (the validity) of others is extrinsic. The validity of yogic awareness and of self-reflexive awareness is intrinsic. But the validity of inference, because of its consisting in ascertainment, is intrinsic." (Singh 1985: 16: *Ata eva tu pratyakṣasya svataḥ prāmāṇyam. Kasyacit tu parataḥ. Yogijñānasya svasaṃvedanasya ca svata eva prāmāṇyam. Anumānasya tu niścayātmakatvāt svata* [sic!] *eva prāmāṇyam.*)

While the gist of this latter passage is in keeping with what we see in Kamalaśila and Manorathanandin, I find a few things in Mokṣākaragupta rather surprising. First of all, the repeated disjunctive *tu* keeps suggesting that we are about to be given an example to the contrary (i.e., of something whose validity is *extrinsic*), which never comes. More importantly, I find especially surprising that inference is here credited with intrinsic validity, and that this is so precisely insofar as it "consists in ascertainment" – with the reasons for my surprise to become clear shortly. I'm almost inclined to suspect a textual problem, although the Tibetan confirms this reading (*rjes su dpag pa ni nges pa'i bdag nyid can nyid kyi phyir rang nyid kho na las tshad ma'o*).

[129] And note that Uṃveka can (and does) quote Dharmakirti as making an argument similar to the one represented by Kumārila: "...Nothing at all belongs to it (i.e., an existent); it simply isn't there." (*Pramāṇavārttika* III.277: *svato 'pi bhāve 'bhāvasya vikalpaś ced ayaṃ samaḥ / na tasya kiñcid bhavati na bhavaty eva kevalam.* This passage comes in Dharmakirti's refutation of *apauruṣeyatva*, and is quoted by Uṃveka at *ŚVTT*, p.45; cf., Miyasaka 1971/72: 154.) That is, explanation of something's non-existence cannot be accounted for by predicating an existing property called "absence" of some existent. The whole discussion here relates, of course, to the eminently tricky discussions of the logic of negation and "non-existent objects" familiar in Western philosophy from, e.g., Meinong. Cf., n.137, below, on how this line of argument might be related to the line of argument I am following.

more neatly captured by Pārthasārathimiśra. Though, as we saw, he devotes most of his attention to alternative interpretations of *svataḥ prāmāṇya* held by other Mīmāṃsakas, he does turn, near the end of the chapter, to face the Buddhists, whose reasoning he summarizes thus: "Since we see that there is awareness of a pot that is (sometimes) based on a pot, and (sometimes) *not* based on a pot, a pot cannot be ascertained simply by way of that (i.e., by way of an awareness that seems to us to have a pot as its object). Thus, it is to be ascertained that the arising of an awareness of a pot (really is) based on a pot *only after ascertainment that there is a pot which really exists as the cause of that awareness*, (which ascertainment can be) based only on perception of pragmatic efficacy."[130]

It is easy to find Buddhists whose accounts reveal that Pārthasārathi's representation of their reasoning is basically on target – and in fact, indications of his accuracy are even forthcoming from the very passages in which Kamalaśīla protests that Buddhists do not hold the view that validity is extrinsic! We can start by noting that Dignāga and Dharmakīrti espoused a fundamentally *causal* epistemology. Thus, for example, we can look to Dharmakīrti, who gives a good statement of this in the context of explaining how, given the Buddhist postulate that all existents exist only "momentarily," one could ever really be confident in what one is perceiving. That is, in the vanishingly small moment that transpires between one's sensory contact with some object, and the production of a sensory *awareness* by that contact, the object originally contacted will have changed; in which case, how can one justifiably think that the object presented to awareness is the same as the object "out there"?[131] The Buddhist

[130] Sastri 198: 51: *Ghaṭād aghaṭāc ca ghaṭajñānadarśanān na tanmātreṇa ghaṭo niścetuṃ śakyate. Tena-arthakriyādarśanād eva taddhetubhūtaghaṭaniścayapurahsaraṃ pūrvasya ghaṭajñānasya ghaṭād utpattir niścetavyā.* Of course, we need only to substitute "silver" or "mother-of-pearl" for the similarly stock "pot" example here to realize that Uṃveka's epistemology is not, after all, so different from this.

[131] This "time-lag" problem is one of the most frequently recurring issues addressed by Georges Dreyfus in his account of Dharmakīrti's philosophy (1997a: *passim.*).

commitment to momentariness, then, clearly raises the same kind of issue that, as Alston noted, motivates most Western elaborations of causal epistemologies – viz., how are we to explain how a knowing subject is related to an object? (Here, the variation on that question is: how are we to explain how a knowing subject could ever be related to an object that is, by definition, only fleetingly existent?) Dharmakīrti's answer: "If it's asked how something could be apprehended at a different time [i.e., given momentariness], [we'd answer:] Philosophers understand apprehendability precisely as being a *cause* that is capable of projecting an image into awareness."[132] That is, Dharmakīrti attempts to overcome the seemingly irreducible difference between *subjects* and *objects* by explaining that a subject's awarenesses are simply among the *effects* produced by that object (together, of course, with the proper conditions in the subject).[133] "Subject" and "object" are related, then, simply as moments in the same causal sequence.

At which point, of course, we can ask, with Alston: on what basis can we possibly specify *which* of the causes of an awareness is at the same time *the thing we're aware of*? For it's clearly the case that among the causes of, say, your present ocular awareness of this page are a host of factors (e.g., the transmission of electrical impulses along the optic nerve, etc.) that are not in any sense among the things *seen*. Buddhists and other Indian philosophers were, of course, aware of this fact, and have something to say about it.[134] How. then, are the relevant causes to be individuated? Here again, Pārthasārathi is accurate: with respect, for example, to an awareness of a pot,

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[132] *Pramāṇavārttika* II.247 (Miyasaka 1971/72: 74): *bhinnakālaṃ kathaṃ grāhyam iti ced grāhyatāṃ viduḥ / hetutvam eva yuktijñā jñānākārārpaṇakṣamam //*. Immediately before quoting this passage, Mokṣākaragupta (in Singh 1985: 21.) gives an even more straightforward statement: "The awareness that apprehends an object is the *effect* of that object; for an object, by virtue of being apprehended, is the cause of an awareness" (*arthagrāhakajñānam arthasya kāryam; artho hi grāhyatvāt jñānasya kāraṇam*).

[133] Cf., n.134, below.

[134] Standard *ābhidhārmika* accounts of causation, for example, involve appeal to four different kinds of "causal conditions" (*pratyaya*), only one of which (the *ālambanapratyaya*) refers to the thing perceived. Cf., also, *Tattvasaṃgraha* 3095: "But since they are themselves insentient, the senses, such as the eyes, do not apprehend objects; rather, they have the quality of being a *cause* with respect to awareness" (*svayaṃ tu jaḍarūpatvāc cakṣurādibhir indriyaiḥ / gṛhyante viṣayā naivaṃ teṣāṃ jñāne tu hetutā //*).

ascertainment that there is a pot which really exists as the cause of that awareness (*taddhetubhūtaghaṭaniścaya*) can only be based perception of pragmatic efficacy (*arthakriyādarśanād eva*). And in fact, we have just seen that, even in the course of denying that they espouse the view that validity is extrinsic, Buddhists such as Kamalaśīla adduce *awareness of pragmatic efficacy* (*arthakriyājñānam*) as a type of cognition whose intrinsic validity they accept.[135] I suggest that the characteristically Buddhist appeals to this notion in fact beg the question, and that, far from providing evidence that the Mīmāṃsaka characterization of the Buddhist position is inaccurate, they can corroborate the judgment that the Mīmāṃsakas are basically right here.

To explain: The notion of "pragmatic efficacy" (*arthakriyā*) is central to both the epistemology and the ontology elaborated particularly by Buddhist epistemologists following Dignāga and Dharmakīrti.[136] It is central to *ontology* insofar as it is held that *capacity to perform some causal function* is definitive of "existing." As Uṃveka puts it in summarizing this Buddhist conviction, "being a thing is defined by the fact of being causally efficacious."[137] For these Buddhists, that is, *to be* just is to be causally interrelated with other things – which is why, for example, God (*iśvara*), when defined as permanent and immutable, cannot coherently be thought to *exist*, since God's *existing*, on the Buddhist account, could only consist in God's being subject to the temporal constraints that go with being causally related to such manifestly changing entities as ourselves.[138] This notion has a parallel significance in the context of *epistemology*, in

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[135] Cf., n. 128, above. Note, particularly, the passage there from Manorathanandin: "But a perception whose object is pragmatic efficacy *intrinsically* consists in experience of pragmatic efficacy; there is not, in regard to this, dependence on the pragmatic efficacy of something else. Hence, this (kind of perception), too, has its validity ascertained intrinsically...."

[136] On this important notion, cf., inter alia, Nagatomi 1967-68. See also Dreyfus 1997a, especially chapter 17 ("Was Dharmakīrti a Pragmatist?").

[137] *ŚVTT*, p.45: *arthakriyākāritvalakṣaṇaṃ hi vastutvam.* This represents one of the possible points of contact between the argument attributed to Buddhists by Kumārila, and the position I am presently sketching. Cf., n.129, above.

[138] Cf., inter alia, Jackson 1985.

which context it seems apt to render the term *arthakriyā* as "pragmatic efficacy"; for the epistemological claim is that one can only *know* what one comes into meaningful *causal contact* with, and that *such causal contact as furthers one's aims* represents the best (and finally the *only*) way of ascertaining anything.[139] Thus, Pārthasārathi represents these Buddhists as holding that the only way to be *sure* that one's awareness of a pot really was caused by a really existing pot, is by appeal to pragmatic efficacy (*arthakriyādarśanād eva taddhetubhūtaghaṭaniścayapuraḥsaraṃ*) – by, for example, seeing if one can successfully carry water with the thing perceived.

The problem with such an appeal, though, is that the second-order awareness *that* the thing perceived is pragmatically efficacious *is itself another awareness*! How, then, can we be confident that, having seemed to carry water with the thing we had judged to be a pot, we have now, as it were, reached epistemic bedrock? The Mīmāṃsaka will, of course, quite rightly allow that a subsequent awareness of pragmatic efficacy can count as a potential source of falsification, such that a subsequent failure to carry water with the thing in question would override the previously justified belief that it was a pot. What the Mīmāṃsakas quite appropriately refuse is the claim that the awareness of pragmatic efficacy provides a fundamentally different *kind* of justification than the initial awareness. Confidence, to the contrary, that pragmatic efficacy *does* provide something more (does tell us, e.g., that an initially justified belief is also *true*), of course, can only be based on the presupposition that "pragmatic efficacy" is somehow more immediately available to awareness than, say, a pot – or, of course, on the concession that the second-

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[139] John Dunne (1999: *passim.*) thus renders the term *arthakriyā* as "telic function" – that is, function with respect to the achievement of some *telos*. While this is in some ways a rather inelegant neologism, it is nevertheless accurate.

Here, it is interesting to note that Sucaritamiśra retains the term *arthakriyā* in his interpretation of Kumārila, using this, in effect, against the Buddhists; cf., n.105, above, where we see Sucaritamiśra urging that "even mistakenly cognized silver, just like correctly cognized silver, is seen conducing to effective action" (*bhrāntisaṃviditarajato 'pi hi samyagrajatabodha iva arthakriyāyai ghaṭamāno dṛśyate*), and that even a mistaken cognition must therefore be judged to effect the kind of "certainty" (*niścaya*) which is the only possible basis of meaningful action in the world. It would be interesting to compare Sucaritamiśra's appeal to this notion with characteristically Buddhist appeals.

order awareness of pragmatic efficacy (*arthakriyājñānam*) is intrinsically valid. And the latter, of course, is precisely what we have just seen Kamalaśila and Manorathanandin concede.[140]

Moreover, there is an important element in this Buddhist epistemological project that positively *compels* precisely such a concession: namely, the tendentious characterization, by Dignāga and Dharmakīrti, of perception as definitively "free of conceptual construction."[141] As we (will!) have seen in chapter two of this dissertation, this definition serves some important Buddhist intuitions, providing much of the basis for the "optimistic epistemology"[142] of this Buddhist tradition – much of the basis, that is to say, for the confidence that, if only we can succeed in eliminating the conceptual elaborations through which we erroneously construct unitary and enduring entities out of the flux of experience, what we will be left with is an untrammeled experience of the way things really are. What this characterization of perception is thought to provide, then, is

[140] Cf., nn.128, 135, above. Here, it should be noted that my characterization of the Buddhist Epistemologists' position is rather tendentious, and that a more sympathetic account would necessarily involve some reference to the role of *svasaṃvedana* in the epistemic process, as that is understood by these Buddhists. To be sure, the Mīmāṃsakas refuse the notion of *svasaṃvedana* (cf., nn.91, 102, above), and such an appeal would therefore have little purchase from their perspective. The notion of *svasaṃvedana* is, however, a contentious and difficult one, and there is substantial disagreement even among Buddhists about just what it amounts to, and whether it necessarily goes with an idealist ontology. A particularly interesting statement of the idea is found at *Tattvasaṃgraha, kārikā* 1999: "Awareness arises as something different from insentient forms; that which is its non-insentience is just this reflexive awareness" (*vijñānaṃ jaḍarūpebhyo vyāvṛttam upajāyate / iyam evātmasaṃvittir asya yā-ajaḍarūpatā //*). That is, the "reflexive" character of awareness is just what distinguishes *awareness* as definitively subjective, as contra the "objectivity" of "insentient forms." Here, then, as Kamalaśila explains, it is not claimed that *svasaṃvedana* is accepted "as being the grasper [of some object]" (Sastri 1968: 682: *na hi grāhakabhāvena-ātmasaṃvedanam abhipretam*). On such a reading, the claim that *svasaṃvedana* has its validity "intrinsically" (for Kamalaśila's statement of which, cf., n.,128 above) may turn out to be very much indeed like Pārthasārathi's epistemic view of the doctrine of *svataḥ prāmāṇya*; for given this understanding of *svasaṃvedana*, the claim would seem to be simply that validity intrinsically attaches to what is not so much a special "kind" of awareness, as to the definitive characteristic of awareness, as such ("*bodhātmakatvena*," as it were). One question that would then have to be addressed in sorting this out is whether the direct realism of the Mīmāṃsakas really requires their refusal of the *svaprakāśatva* of awareness (cf., n.102, above).

[141] This will particularly have been elaborated in chapter 2 of this dissertation. For Kumārila's rejection of this characterization, cf., *Ślokavārttika, pratyakṣa* 133-137, *et passim*. Note, though, that Kumārila's own account of perception does retain the intuition that perception at least *initially* affords access to something more unmediated; thus, Kumārila allows that there is an initial moment of *pratyakṣa* that is *nirvikalpaka*, simply adding that subsequent, *savikalpaka* moments still count as *pratyakṣa*. Cf., *Ślokavārttika, pratyakṣa* 118-121.

[142] The phrase is Roger Jackson's; cf, Jackson 1993: 75, 416-7n.

the possibility of unmediated access to the "given." Tom Tillemans provides an apt characterization of this logic: "The [Buddhist] Epistemologist, in effect, takes a position which is common to many theorists East and West: he says that while the ideas we have about our data may be false, at least the data which immediately appear as given to our perception, if taken only for what they are, must be real and unassailable."[143]

The trouble is that second-order cognitions such as *ascertainment* (*niścaya*), as these same Buddhists insist, are eminently "conceptual" (*vikalpaka*). Thus, there is a tension built into this account of perception: perceptual cognitions are held to provide the foundations for all subsequent "certainty" (with inferences, for example, being necessarily derivative of perceptions); and yet, *perceptual cognitions themselves can never yield certainty*, which will always be the result of a subsequent judgment. This idea is thematized by some of the later commentators on Dharmakīrti, who resort to talk of "ascertainment that is obtained subsequent to perception" (*pratyakṣapṛṣṭhalabdhaniścaya*).[144] According to this idea, the second-order *ascertainment* of a first-order perception is, it turns out, confirmed by an inference – specifically, an inference from the subsequently observed fact of pragmatic efficacy.[145] As John Dunne explains in elaborating the commentator Devendrabuddhi's account of this process, "Devendrabuddhi does not wish to claim that [the initial] perception cannot be a *pramāṇa*.... [Rather, he must conclude that] that initial perception was a *pramāṇa*;

[143] Tillemans 1990: 37-8. Of course, as Tillemans goes on to note, this is all complicated by the fact that the Buddhist epistemologists ultimately want to defend the kind of idealism associated with Vijñānavāda, and hence, what is finally "given" to perceptual awareness is such that "the object of knowledge must be mental and that mind knows itself." (*Ibid.*, p.38) Nevertheless, the characterization of perception as "free of conceptual elaboration" does important work in this account of things. Note again that, while Mīmāṃsakas refuse this characterization, Kumārila's doctrine of perception (with its two stages of *nirvikalpaka-* and *savikalpaka-pratyakṣa*) nevertheless honors the intuition that *pratyakṣa* at least initially provides access to a somewhat "unelaborated" version of the world. Cf., n.141, above.

[144] On this, see especially Dunne 1999: 318, ff.

[145] Cf., *Tattvasaṃgraha* 3090: "The validity of perception, too, is by way of inference, as already explained and ascertained; that (perception) is (inferred to be) a *pramāṇa* by virtue of its being produced by pure causes, like other ones [i.e., perceptions]" (*niścitoktānumānena pratyakṣasyāpi mānatā / śuddhakāraṇajanyatvāt tatpramāṇaṃ tadanyavat //*).

one was simply unable to determine the [*prāmāṇya*] of that perception at the time of the perception."[146] Hence, Devendrabuddhi's appeal to a subsequent *pramāṇa* – and specifically, to one "in which appears the accomplishment of one's goal."[147] And hence, furthermore, the need to concede (on pain of infinite regress) that this subsequent *pramāṇa* has *its* validity intrinsically.

Clearly, this account begs precisely the question at issue, and the Mīmāṃsakas can (and do) quite reasonably ask, as Alston would: if you're willing to credit the *subsequent* awareness as intrinsically valid, why not just credit the *initial* awareness as such?[148] One reason why the Buddhist epistemologists do not, it should be clear, is that they remain wedded to an essentially *causal* epistemology[149] – one that is motivated, as Pārthasārathi rightly sees, by the desire to explain how the knowing subject can be related to objects of awareness, with such a relation called for by the recognition that, as we're surely all aware, we sometimes seem to ourselves to see a pot when, it turns out, there's no pot there to be seen. The Buddhist epistemologists thus quintessentially exemplify the standard epistemological procedure, according to which the relation in question is understood as a *causal* relation, with appeal to "pragmatic efficacy" ultimately being

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[146] Dunne 1999: 320. Dunne, concentrating on the sense of the word *pramāṇa* as meaning a cognitive "instrument" (as well as on the fact that *prāmāṇya* is a secondary derivative), renders *prāmāṇya* as "instrumentality." This seems to me an infelicitous translation, particularly given my present concerns; hence, my replacement of that with the word *prāmāṇya* in brackets. Cf., n.6, above.

[147] *Ibid.*: 321. The same phrase (*arthakriyānirbhāsam*) appeared also in Manorathanandin; cf., n.128, above.

[148] Cf., Kumārila's *Bṛhaṭṭikā*, as preserved in *Tattvasaṃgraha* 2905-7: "And the validity of language, etc., is not to be proven by inference, lest that of perception, too, need to be proven in the same way [*aviśeṣataḥ*]. And since [the validity] of that other one by which the validity of pramāṇas is shown would also need to be proved, infinite regress ensues. If the validity of the probative one were [proven] by another that is unproven, then that of the things to be proven could be [valid] in just the same way" (*sādhyā na ca-anumānena śabdādinām pramāṇatā / pratyakṣasyāpi sā mābhūt tatsādhyaiva-aviśeṣataḥ // pramāṇānāṃ pramāṇatvaṃ yena ca-anyena sādhyate / tasya-apy anyena sādhyatvād anavasthā prasajyate // anyena-asādhitā cet syāt ṣadhakasya pramāṇatā / sādhyānām api sā siddhā tadvad eva bhavet tataḥ //*). (The same point is made at *Ślokavārttika* II.81: *na ca-anumānataḥ sādhyā śabdādinām pramāṇatā / sarvasyaiva hi mā prāpat pramāṇāntarasādhyatā.*) Of course, one reason why these Buddhists might wish to avoid thus crediting the initial awareness is that such seems to lead quickly to the kind of direct realism favored by the Mīmāṃsakas – with these Buddhists ultimately favoring an idealist metaphysics.

[149] One which, *as* causal, requires a *sequence* of cause (*pramāṇa*) and effect (*prāmāṇya*); hence, the account *has* to require reference to something *sequential* to the initial awareness.

meant to show that there really is a pot which exists as the *cause* of our awareness of a pot (*arthakriyādarśanād eva taddhetubhūtaghaṭaniścayapuraḥsaraṃ*). Clearly, this is structurally the same epistemological procedure that Alston characterizes as the one reversed by him.

Thus wedded to this essentially causal approach to epistemology, the Buddhist critics of the Mīmāṃsaka doctrine of intrinsic validity apparently fail to see that this procedure represents ***precisely the presupposition that is called into question by that doctrine*** (or at least, by Pārthasārathi's interpretation thereof).[150] Thus, insofar as what we want to ***explain*** with an epistemological project is *how we know what we know*, it explains nothing at all to hold both that such an explanation is required, and that an explanation that presupposes what is in question can count as valid. And yet, this is precisely what we see when Buddhists refuse the Mīmāṃsaka doctrine on the grounds that it cannot explain how we can be sure we're not deluded, and yet, with their appeal to awareness of "pragmatic efficacy," claim to have an explanation. Thus, Śāntarakṣita's answer to the question of why we should credit the second-order awareness of "pragmatic efficacy" (but not the first-order awareness in need of being certified by that), is in fact no answer at all: "Therefore, as long as there has arisen no awareness whose object is pragmatic efficacy, there can be doubt regarding the initial cognition's veridicality, owing to the [possibility of] causes of deception. In regard to the first cognition, there are various causes of deception, such as the non-perception of its effect, perception of similarity [with mistaken awarenesses], dullness of the cognition, and so forth. But when there appears an awareness which apprehends the effect, there is no [cause of deception],

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[150] Thus, despite Kamalaśīla's refusal of the label of "*parataḥprāmāṇyavādin*" (cf., nn.127, 128, above), numerous passages can be adduced from the *Tattvasaṃgraha* (and from Kamalaśīla's *pañjikā* thereon) which show that a characteristically Buddhist appeal to *arthakriyājñāna* is begging precisely the question at issue. Cf., e.g., *Tattvasaṃgraha* 2835, 2956, 2958-2961, 2965. But of course, *arthakriyā* is one of the Mīmāṃsaka examples of something "other" to which one might appeal to demonstrate validity; cf., inter alia, Pārthasārathi's conclusion (n.114, above): *Tena svata eva jñānād arthatathātvarūpam ātmiyaṃ prāmāṇyaṃ niścīyate. Na tu guṇajñānāt, saṃvādajñānāt, arthakriyājñānād vā tadavagantavyam.*

because of the experience of action[151] which is directly related to the thing [perceived in the first cognition]."[152] Clearly, this presupposes that the subsequent "experience of action" is reliable, and the Buddhists' uncompromising commitment to an essentially causal epistemology has led to a failure to recognize what Alston has aptly called *epistemic circularity.*

3.ix. Concluding assessment: Mīmāṃsā's inversion of epistemology and its deployment in service of Vedic authority

I have suggested, however, that on Pārthasārathimiśra's interpretation of the doctrine of intrinsic validity, the question of "how we know what we know" is addressed by way of a *doxastic* epistemology, and that the doctrine of intrinsic validity is therefore best understood precisely as calling into question the presuppositions of a causal epistemology. We saw this reversal of the standard procedure in, for example, Pārthasārathi's contention that *pramāṇas* are explained by the prior (prima facie) fact of *prāmāṇya*, rather than the reverse. I would like to introduce my concluding assessment of the Mīmāṃsaka project by looking closely at one of the most interesting passages in Pārthasārathi's treatment of the subject, since it is a passage that offers a very nifty argument to the effect that, if the governing Mīmāṃsaka goal (viz., that of securing the authority of the Vedas) is to be served, the doctrine in question *must* be understood as thus opposed to any causal account of validity.

There are several advantages to our beginning a conclusion with a look at this passage. First of all, this passage represents among the strongest of Pārthasārathi's

[151] The word here is *kriyā*, which clearly refers to *arthakriyā*.

[152] *Tattvasaṃgraha* 2965-67: *tasmād arthakriyābhāsaṃ jñānaṃ yāvan na jāyate / tāvad ādye apramāśaṅkā jāyate bhrāntihetutaḥ // anantaraṃ phalād dṛṣṭiḥ sādṛśyasya-upalambanam / mater apaṭutetyādi bhrāntikāraṇam atra ca // kāryāvabhāsivijñāne jāte tv etan na vidyate / sākṣād vastunibaddhāyāḥ kriyāyāḥ prativedanāt //.*

claims to have advanced an interpretation that is most adequate to the inner logic of the Mīmāṃsaka tradition (and hence, among the best arguments to be made in favor of his *exegetical* adequacy to the tradition). Secondly, insofar as these passages quite clearly tell us how we ought to understand the doctrine, they can serve very well to return us to an assessment of the *philosophical* interpretations of it offered by Matilal and Mohanty, who can, in light of these passages, all the more clearly be seen to have missed the point and to be begging the questions at issue. However, while these passages will thus facilitate a defense of the doctrine both on exegetical and philosophical grounds, they also serve nicely to re-introduce an important question that I have so far deferred – namely, that of the "authorlessness" or "transcendence" (*apauruṣeyatva*) of the Vedas, and the role of this postulate in the Mīmāṃsaka project. This part of the Mīmāṃsaka argument cannot, I think, finally be bracketed from consideration in a final assessment of the argument. It is in regard to this postulate that contemporary readers are most likely to object to the Mīmāṃsaka project. However, while I share the intuition that the appeal to *apauruṣeyatva* is problematic, I will finally eschew that issue and instead sketch two other significant avenues for questioning the Mīmāṃsaka deployment of the epistemological doctrine we have been examining. These will have to do, in particular, with a possibly significant difference between the examples first introduced by Śabara, and those that are central to Alston – a difference that has the effect, *inter alia*, of returning us finally to the essentially hermeneutic concerns of the Mīmāṃsā tradition.

Interestingly, the passage in which Pārthasārathi thus returns us to the transcendence of the Vedas at the same time represents one of the few points in regard to which Pārthasārathi (or any Mīmāṃsaka, for that matter) follows the Buddhist epistemologists – and in particular, Dignāga, who first formulated one of the most basic principles of inter-traditional philosophical debate: in order for one's inference to be probative for the other party to a debate, it must turn on a reason that is accepted by both

parties, so that one cannot, for example, adduce as a reason something given in the scriptures of only one party.[153] Pārthasārathi alludes to this principle in the course of further emphasizing, contra Uṃveka, that validity must be understood as obtaining prima facie with respect to *all* awarenesses, and not only those which turn out to have been veridical. Regarding the entire inquiry into *prāmāṇya*, then, he says:

> And if it were considered with only *pramāṇas* as object, then, since the object [has to] be established for both parties to the debate, all that would be conclusively shown would be the intrinsic validity of those [objects] which are [already] established as being *pramāṇas* for both [parties]. And thus, because of the Veda's not being a [possible] object of inquiry, since it is *not* a *pramāṇa* established for both parties, its intrinsic validity would not be established. In this matter, a reflection that is not conducive to [showing] the validity of the Vedas would be pointless, like an inquiry regarding a crow's teeth. But when intrinsic validity and dependent invalidity are being proven with respect to mere awareness (*jñānamātram*), [then] validity, in the form of the quiddity of an object, could be understood as intrinsically belonging to the Veda, too. Because of the absence of awareness of faults in [its] cause, it becomes established without exception; hence, [given my emphasis on the fact that we are concerned with the intrinsic validity of *all* awarenesses, and not simply with those that turn out to be veridical], this reflection is purposeful.[154]

This strikes me as a brilliant point, and it warrants unpacking. Pārthasārathi here points out that Mīmāṃsakas *cannot* proceed on the assumption that what is at stake is only the validity of *pramāṇas* (i.e., the validity only of those awarenesses that are uncontroversially admitted as veridical and/or probative); for according to Dignāga's

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[153] The relevant passage occurs in Dignāga's *Pramāṇasamuccaya*, which is no longer extant in Sanskrit. The Tibetan is given by Yotsuya 1999: 73: *gnyi ga la grub chos kyis ni / tha snyad bya phyir gnyi ga dang / gcig la ldog dang the tshom dang / gzhi ma grub la mi 'dod do* ("[A syllogism] should be formulated with a reason that is established for both parties. Therefore [a reason] which is denied or suspected, or [whose] basis is not established for one or both parties is not admitted [as probative]."). This principle is crucial for Yotsuya's case since the same principle figures prominently, too, in the debate between the so-called "*svātāntrika*" and "*prāsaṅgika*" Mādhyamikas; cf., La Vallée Poussin 1970b: 35, n.2. Interestingly, La Vallée Poussin finds a Sanskrit statement of Dignāga's principle in Pārthasārathi's *Nyāyaratnākara*: *bhavadvṛddhair eva hi Dignāgācāryair "yo vādiprativādiniścito hetu sa sādhanam" ity uktam* ("for it was said by your very own teacher Dignāga that 'a proof is a reason that is ascertained by both parties to a debate'"). Cf., also, Randle 1981: 28-9, which gives the same fragment from the same source.

[154] Sastri 1982: 50: *yadi ca pramāṇāny eva viṣayikṛtya cintyeta, tato viṣayasya-ubhayavādisiddhatvāt yāny ubhayoḥ pramāṇatayā prasiddhāni, teṣāṃ prāmāṇyaṃ svata ity etāvat siddhāntyeta. Tataś ca vedasya-ubhayavādisiddhaprāmāṇyābhāvena vicārāviṣayatvān na-asya svataḥ prāmāṇyaṃ sādhitaṃ syāt. Tatra vedaprāmāṇyānupayogini cintā kākadantaparīkṣāvad akartavyā syāt. Jñānamātraṃ tv adhikṛtya svataḥ prāmāṇye, parataś ca-aprāmāṇye sādhyamāne, vedasyāpi svatas tāvad viṣayatathātvarūpaṃ prāmāṇyam avagataṃ syāt. Kāraṇadoṣajñānāder abhāvān nirapavādaṃ sthitaṃ bhavatīti prayojanavatīyaṃ cintā.*

widely adopted rule for debate, such an assumption would effectively disqualify the Veda from coming under the purview of this discussion, insofar as non-Mīmāṃsakas will not grant that the Veda is a *pramāṇa*. Indeed, whether or not the Veda (and specifically, *codanā*, "Vedic injunction") should count as a *pramāṇa* is *precisely the issue in question.* It would, Pārthasārathi suggests, therefore be to little avail to ask how it is simply that *pramāṇas* have the status they do, since it must first be ascertained that Vedic injunction is an example of one. And the only way to further this goal is to show that *all* awarenesses (even those that turn out not to have been veridical) should, prima facie, be credited with validity; for then the point is that, insofar as an awareness engendered by a Vedic injunction (simply in virtue of its *being* an awareness) has *validity*, the Vedic injunction first becomes a candidate for status as a *pramāṇa*. This effectively reverses the usual procedure, which would be to show that something has validity (*prāmāṇya*) insofar as it was caused by a *pramāṇa*.

Pārthasārathi rightly sees, then, that the only way for the argument to get off the ground is instead to show that Vedic injunction *is a pramāṇa because it has validity* (and because its validity can never be overridden; on which, more shortly). Here, I think, is where we have the most striking and significant similarity with Alston's approach; for Alston makes precisely the same point when he notes that the only way to argue, in such a way as to address those who antecedently reject the assumption that God exists, "that people do genuinely perceive God is to argue for the epistemological position that beliefs formed on the basis of such (putative) perceptions are (prima facie) justified. If this is the case, we have a good reason for regarding many of the putative perceptions as genuine; for if the subject were not often really perceiving X why should the experience involved provide justification for beliefs about X?"[155] Similarly, if it were not really the case that

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[155] See above.

one desirous of heaven should perform a Vedic sacrifice (*svargakāmo yajeta*), then why would the experience of hearing that this is so provide justification for this belief?

It is, however, important to ask whether these two cases are really parallel; for Alston is talking about what phenomenologically presents itself as a *perception*, while the Mīmāṃsaka case involves a *proposition* (or an "injunction," *codanā*). Recall, then, that Alston's case for the essentially *perceptual* character of experiences of God centrally involved examples of subjects who reported finding themselves *presented* with something that, as it were, intruded upon their faculties.[156] In the Mīmāṃsaka example, on the other hand, we are faced with what is essentially a *text*, and it is not clear that this makes the same kind of claim upon someone who hears it as does an immediate experience; for it seems that higher-order judgments must already have been made in order for its injunctions to be meaningful, such that it is not immediately clear that textual knowledge qualifies as what Alston calls a "doxastic practice."

I will have more to say about this shortly. For now, let us proceed with a sympathetic account of Pārthasārathi's reversal of the direction of explanation. This reversal of the usual procedure, it seems to me, just about clinches Pārthasārathi's case that his approach best fits with the concerns of Mīmāṃsā. But of course, the fact that the internal logic of the tradition thus requires a doxastic (as contra a causal) theory of validity is not itself a reason for our *adopting* one, even if it is a reason for thinking that the attribution of this position represents the most accurate exegesis of the tradition. In fact, as I will shortly suggest, this "internal logic" of the tradition represents what contemporary readers are likely to consider the most philosophically problematic issue. Still, I would like to emphasize that there are also good *philosophical* reasons for thinking that the Mīmāṃsakas' doxastic epistemology is a formidable one, and that it

[156] For a critique particularly of this part of Alston's argument, cf., Gale 1994.

effectively addresses some significant problems. We can particularly appreciate that this is so if we now consider, at greater length than we have yet done, how B. K. Matilal and J. N. Mohanty represent the doctrine of intrinsic validity; for if we can appreciate the extent to which their interpretation of it remains guided by precisely the presuppositions the doctrine means to undermine, then we can clarify what kinds of problems are addressed by this inversion of the standard procedure.

As we have already seen, Matilal, quite aptly capturing the standard procedure in Indian philosophy, has said that "... a pramāṇa in the Sanskrit tradition is conceived as a combination of both evidence and causal factor.... it is both a piece of evidence for knowing something and also a cause, in fact the most efficient causal factor ... of the mental episode called knowledge."[157] That Matilal sees the Mīmāṃsaka doctrine as no exception to this assumption is clear from an example he uses to illustrate the difference between that and the Naiyāyika account that he favors:

> [The Mīmāṃsaka position] is similar to saying that man is naturally good or mangoes are naturally sweet but intervention of *bad* or abnormal factors or extraneous circumstances makes a man evil or a mango sour. On the other hand [the Nyāya position] argues that truth or knowledge-hood[158] is not an intrinsic property of awareness much as goodness is not an essential property of mankind or sweetness not essential for something to be a mango. *What a man becomes, good or evil, depends upon the circumstances or causal factors against which he reacts. When a mango grows it becomes sweet or sour depending upon the causal factors from which it grows. An awareness likewise becomes true or false depending upon the causal conditions from which it arise*s. [my emphasis][159]

It should be clear that, given the interpretation I have defended, this example completely misses the mark; for the point at stake in this analogy is an *ontological* one, and therefore isn't comparable to the strictly *epistemological* point at stake when we understand the *prāmāṇya* debate to concern nothing more than *prima facie justification.*

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[157] Matilal 1986: 135; cf., n.11, above (where Mohanty's similar observation is also noted).

[158] N.b., again, the tendentious and unexplained rendering of *prāmāṇya* as "truth" (or "knowledge-hood").

[159] Matilal 1986: 145-6.

That is, the prima facie *appearance* of justification is not at all comparable to the eminently ontological question of whether or not a mango, *an sich*, becomes sweet; for the whole point is that this prima facie appearance is presented *even in cases where the awareness turns out not to have been veridical.* In contrast, whether or not a mango, *an sich*, was caused to be sweet is a question that admits of only one answer.[160] Thus, the proper understanding of Pārthasārathi's interpretation of the doctrine requires that we appreciate the fundamentally *prima facie* quality of validity, which is not therefore to be understood as an *effect* or *outcome* of the epistemic process. But Matilal's presupposition of a causal epistemology has led him to see *prāmāṇya* precisely as this kind of "effect," such that its *resulting* from causes can be likened to a mango's resulting from conditions of growth. It is, I suggest, fundamentally this notion of *prāmāṇya* as the *culmination* of the epistemic process that has Matilal render it as "truth."

The same presuppositions are evident in the works of J. N. Mohanty, who says of the Mīmāṃsakas that they assert "that a cognition is both born as true and is apprehended *ab initio* as true...."[161] Mohanty rightly understands that Pārthasārathi has emphasized the relation of this doctrine to *all* awarenesses (and not simply to veridical ones), but is sufficiently enamored of causal epistemologies that he doesn't know what to make of this: "It must be added that though [his definition of validity as the quiddity of an object] is meant to distinguish right knowledge from error, nevertheless – Pārthasārathi reminds us – when the Mimāmsaka seeks to establish the intrinsic truth of all knowledge, he has in view all knowledge and not merely the right ones. This is in fact ... one of the puzzling situations with which the *svataḥprāmāṇya* theory is faced."[162] Thus, Mohanty complains

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[160] Though if we talk about someone's *experience* of whether or not a mango is sweet, the case is perhaps different; hence, my qualification of the example as concerning a "mango-*an-sich*," which is clearly how Matilal understands the example.

[161] Mohanty 1992b: 143. Again, n.b. that Mohanty assumes it is "truth" that is in play here. Mohanty's treatment of the subject in this work basically reiterates what he has said in the longer treatment to be found in Mohanty 1966.

[162] Mohanty 1966: 11.

that Kumārila, in saying that the validity of awareness obtains simply in virtue of its *being* awareness (*bodhātmakatvena prāptā buddheḥ pramāṇatā*), has not given a very "precise definition" of validity, insofar as this definition leads to the absurd conclusion that "every knowledge is intrinsically true." Thus, he commends Uṃveka's refusal of this definition: "Umbeka, commenting on the Ślokavārtika, rejects the identification of *prāmāṇya* with *bodhakatva* on the plea that though the latter is intrinsic to all knowledge yet it does not serve to distinguish right from wrong knowledge...."[163]

Like Uṃveka, then, neither Matilal nor Mohanty can imagine how to distinguish between veridical and erroneous awareness except by appeal to causes. It should be clear from the foregoing attention to Pārthasārathimiśra, however, that Matilal – in saying that awareness "becomes true or false depending upon the causal conditions from which it arises" – bases his critique of the Mimāṃsakas on precisely the presupposition that, if Pārthasārathi is right, they mean to undermine; and that Mohanty, in thinking that the *svataḥ prāmāṇya* of *all* awarenesses absurdly entails the "truth" of erroneous awarenesses, assumes that *prāmāṇya* must be the end result of the epistemic process, the "effect" that is caused by *pramāṇas*. Clearly, if my interpretation (informed by Alston and attested within the tradition by Pārthasārathi) of the Mīmāṃsaka doctrine of *svataḥ prāmāṇya* is the preferred one, then Matilal and Mohanty have misrepresented it; for on this interpretation, the whole point of the doctrine is precisely to reverse causal accounts of knowledge, and to take *prāmāṇya*, in the sense of "justified belief," as *starting* the epistemic process, which *then* proceeds, on the basis of possible falsification, to see what stands (and what is eliminated) as a *pramāṇa*.

Moreover, I hope to have shown that this interpretation represents not only the best exegesis of the tradition (in which case, Matilal and Mohanty are guilty of

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[163] *Ibid.*: 9.

misrepresenting the position), but also that it is a *philosophically cogent* account – in which case, Matilal and Mohanty are on shaky philosophical ground. Far from successfully dismissing the doctrine with the arguments adduced above, then, they have, in effect, simply stated their commitment to precisely the presuppositions that this version of the doctrine so effectively calls into question. On my reading, that is, the whole point of the doctrine is to argue that an appeal to *pramāṇas* as the *cause* of *prāmāṇya* can never successfully explain the latter, as any such explanation will inevitably presuppose the validity of whatever *pramāṇas* are adduced (and what else *could* be adduced but some "way of knowing," some *other pramāṇa*?). Uṃveka, for example, wants to be sure that we first ascertain (presumably on independent grounds) which are and which are not the veridical awarenesses (which are the genuine awarenesses of silver, and which the ones that mistake mother-of-pearl for such), so that we can be sure that only the former *end up* being credited with validity. But we can rejoin by asking: how can it be determined *which* of the many factors that cause an awareness (of, say, a pot) are the ones relevant to the determination that, as Pārthasārathi put it with respect to the Buddhists, "*there is a pot which really exists as the cause of that awareness*"? How, that is, can we pick out this "really existing pot" as the cause which distinguishes a veridical awareness of a pot, from an erroneous one that nevertheless shares among *its* causes a similar pattern of neurological events?

It is in attempting to answer something like the latter question that the Buddhists adduce "awareness of pragmatic efficacy" (*arthakriyājñānam*) as the criterion that alone can ascertain that "there is a pot which really exists as the cause of that awareness." But of course, the second-order awareness *that* the perceived pot is pragmatically efficacious *is itself another awareness*. Realizing this, Buddhist epistemologists were forced to concede that *this particular kind of awareness* (that is, *arthakriyānirbhāsaṃ pratyakṣam*,

a "perception which has pragmatic efficacy as its appearance")[164] is, in fact, one whose validity is intrinsic – or else succumb to the charge of infinite regress.

And it is, in the end, precisely this idea that is the target of the whole Mīmāṃsaka project: that is, the idea that some particular *pramāṇas* (some special *kinds* of awareness) have privileged access to the world. Here, it is helpful to recall the origin of this whole discussion in Śabara's contention that we cannot *know* (i.e., especially, on *perceptual* grounds) that one who performs the *agnihotra* sacrifice does not attain heaven thereby. The whole project, that is, gets started by questioning the privileged status particularly of *perception* – with perception's privileged status thus needing to be undermined by the Mīmāṃsakas insofar as perception is accorded *precisely* such a privileged status by the Buddhist epistemologists who define it as "free of conceptual elaboration," and as thus yielding unmediated access to "the given." And it is because it is particularly the privileged status of *perception* that is at issue that, even though it is simply the validity of Vedic injunction (*codanā*) that is at issue for the Mīmāṃsakas, it is nevertheless necessary to ask about the validity of *all* kinds of awareness (as Kumārila says in starting the discussion, *sarvavijñānaviṣayam idam tāvat parīkṣyatām*). That is, the strategy is to undermine the privileged status particularly of perception by arguing that even this most uncontroversially reliable of *pramāṇas* turns out to yield only prima facie validity, since any attempt to *demonstrate* its reliability inevitably involves epistemic circularity. This, then, is the logic that impels Pārthasārathi's complete inversion of the logic of Indian epistemology, and has us take *prāmāṇya* not as the "effect," in the form of "truth," that is "caused" by *pramāṇas*; but rather, in the form of *prima facie justification*, as the start of the epistemic process. Insofar as their critiques continue to presuppose the standard logic, then, Matilal and Mohanty, like Śāntarakṣita and Kamalaśīla, are begging the

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[164] Cf., nn.128, 147, above.

question.

Finally, I hope to have shown that, while what is thus "intrinsic" to awareness on this account is simply its providing prima facie justification, it is nevertheless possible for this to provide the basis for strong truth claims. This addresses what is, it seems to me, Mohanty's more important concern. In concluding his survey of Indian debates on *prāmāṇya*, Mohanty does finally give some consideration to something like the interpretation I have defended:

> It has been held by many that what the *svataḥ* theory says is that every knowledge has an intrinsic *claim to truth*, that *prāmāṇya* for this theory is not truth but truth-claim,[165] which has to be accepted unless and until it has been refuted. The Naiyāyikas on the other hand speak of actual truth and not of mere tentative truth-claim. This[166] is indeed a very ingenious device, but I think it is too simple to be true. The *svataḥ* theory, I should think, is talking about truth and not merely of truth-claim .... It has also been suggested that the *svataḥ* theory is concerned with truth in the unreflective sense, while the *parataḥ* theory with reflective confirmation or validation so that both the theories are correct. There is an unreflective acceptance which does not rule out the need for subsequent validation. I think this way of reconciling the theory fails to account for an important aspect of the *svataḥ* theory, namely for the fact that this theory has no room at all for subsequent validation.[167]

There are two important points to be made in response to this passage. First, as Alston effectively shows, a doxastic epistemology is *not* incompatible with strong truth-claims. Indeed, this kind of epistemology amounts to a thematization of the very direct sort of realism which takes the things perceived to be really existent.[168] If anything, this

[165] Note that Mohanty is so reluctant to give up the translation of *prāmāṇya* as "truth" that he can here moderate the position only by distinguishing truth, simpliciter, from "truth *claim*." Clearly, though, he here has in mind something like the position I have defended, according to which the distinction is really one between *truth* and *epistemic justification*.

[166] Mohanty's strained syntax here obscures the fact that he is referring back to the first sentence, i.e., to the Mīmāṃsaka position.

[167] Mohanty 1966: 78-9.

[168] As Taber (1992: 221) puts it: "If 'innocent until proven guilty' sums up Mīmāṃsā theory of knowledge, then 'what you see is what you get' sums up Mīmāṃsā metaphysics." In this regard, it is interesting that Matilal sets out to defend the kind of "direct" or "naive realism" that he takes to be particularly associated (contra "Buddhist phenomenalism and idealism") with Nyāya; cf., Matilal 1986: 1, ff. But the realism of the Mīmāṃsakas is, it seems to me, strong enough to make even a Naiyāyika blush with envy.

position amounts to a *stronger* version of realism than what might be defended with respect to a causal epistemology. For while a causal account starts with the presumption that we must first show "that S really did perceive X and then go on to consider what beliefs about X, if any, are justified by being based on that perception," this doxastic account starts from the uncontroversial *phenomenological* fact that we experience our awareness as presenting us with a world – that, as Pārthasārathi puts it, awareness "appears" (*bhāti*) to us as having validity – and then, insofar as it starts from the presumption of *justification*, takes us as entitled to consider ourselves *justified* in thinking ourselves to experience, in fact, what we *seem* to ourselves to experience. Such justification is, on this view, all that is required for us to be justified in claiming to hold true beliefs. It should, then, be clear that *svataḥ prāmāṇya*, on this account, functions as part of an argument that is neither *skeptical* nor *anti-realist*. Thus, as Alston says, the reduced epistemic status that goes with taking epistemic circularity as inevitable "attaches to the *higher-level* claim that [perceptual awareness] is reliable, not to the particular perceptual beliefs that issue from that practice. As for the latter, what we are claiming is still the full-blooded (prima facie) justification ... that involves likelihood of truth.... [But t]his does not, of course, imply that the higher-level claim is not justified in the truth-conducive sense. It is just that we have given up on *showing* that it is." (181) As Pārthasārathi put it in making a precisely analogous point, though in either case it will be credited as prima facie valid, an awareness is a *pramāṇa* or a non-*pramāṇa* from the outset; it is not its intrinsic *status* that is changed by any subsequent revision or falsification, it is only *our awareness thereof*.[169]

Secondly, specifically regarding Mohanty's related lament that "this theory has no room at all for subsequent validation": There is a sense in which this is true, since the

[169] Cf., inter alia, n.109, above.

argument is, in effect, that *the desire for subsequent validation is precisely the problem*, and that if "knowledge" is thought to require this in order to qualify as such, then nobody would "know" anything! In a way, then, this doctrine is also a critique of the idea that "knowledge" is best characterized as something like "justified true belief." The latter definition suggests that one is entitled to claim *knowledge* only when one is both justified, *and* capable of demonstrating (presumably on grounds other than those that provide justification) that the belief thus justified is also *true*; and the whole point of this doctrine is that there *can* be no other *kind* of grounds for demonstrating that a justified belief is also true than the "kind" that provides justification in the first place. Hence, the possibility of subsequent falsification is indeed the main force behind revisions in belief, and positive "validation" is impossible if that is thought to consist in the adducing of justifying reasons that are somehow thought to have greater purchase than the initial grounds for justification. Again, though, this fact only results in diminished truth claims if it is thought that we can only ever be justified in such as the result of having *done* something special; but as Alston rightly says, "in order for me to *be* justified in believing that p it is not necessary that I have *done* anything by way of an argument for p or for my epistemic situation vis-à-vis p. Unless I *am* justified in many beliefs without arguing for them, there is precious little I justifiably believe." The same point is nicely made by Uṃveka, who makes an argument much like one we will see in our treatment of Candrakīrti:

> ...where there arises [an awareness] which yields certainty regarding the suchness of a thing – [i.e., an awareness of the form] 'this is so' – and [where] there's no contradictory conception or awareness of deficiencies in the cause, there, it doesn't make sense for a discerning person to have a doubt to the effect that "it could be otherwise because [we could] see deviation somewhere." For how could a discerning person effect a doubt like 'the object being understood based on the cognition "it's thus" could be otherwise, or otherwise again'? For [he would be] contradicting [his own] cognition.... where a non-arisen doubt is forcibly (*balāt*) produced based on the [mere possibility of] seeing deviation somewhere, *there* is

contradiction of [one's own] cognition.[170]

We don't, in other words, willfully *produce* doubt regarding our cognitions, and we are therefore under no compulsion to press doubts so far as to consider "true" only those beliefs that have been rendered completely secure from any possible doubt. Indeed, insofar as the skeptic's own beliefs cannot be justified in the way that the skeptic thinks is required of religious beliefs, then it is not the religious beliefs that are unreasonable, but the skeptic's demand for justification.[171]

This point seems to me to be cogent, and to reflect the plausibility of characterizing the general epistemology of the Mīmāṃsakas as, in fact, a fairly common-sensical one, and certainly as a defensible one. Still, we are entitled to ask whether the Mīmāṃsakas' deployment of this epistemological doctrine really does (as they would wish to conclude) positively compel assent to the claim that the Vedas are uniquely authoritative. Here, it is important to address, among other things, the question I bracketed earlier: is the case of hearing a Vedic injunction (such as "*svargakāmo yajeta*") really, as my comparison with Alston seems to require, parallel to cases where the presentational immediacy of an experience entitles us to characterize it as *perceptual*?

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[170] *ŚVTT*, pp.59-60: *yat punaḥ idam ittham iti vastutathātvaniścāyakam utpadyate, na ca bādhakapratyayaḥ, kāraṇadoṣajñānaṃ vā, tatra-iyam āśaṅkā kvacid vyabicāradarśanāt anyathābhāvaḥ syāt iti na yuktā vivekinā kartum. Kathaṃ hi tathā iti sampratyayād avagamyamāno 'rthaḥ anyathaiva anyathāpi vā syāt ity āśaṅkāṃ viveki kuryāt, pratītivirodhāt .... yat tv anutpanna eva saṃśayaḥ kvacidvyabicāradarśanāt balād utpādyate, atra pratītivirodhaḥ.* A similar argument is made by Kumārila in a passage from the *Bṛhaṭṭīkā* that is preserved as *Tattvasaṃgraha* 2871: *Utprekṣyate hi yo mohād ajātam api bādhakam / sa sarvavyavahāreṣu saṃśayātmā kṣayaṃ vrajet //* ("For he who, out of delusion, posits an overrider even when none has arisen – he, being doubtful in all his worldly transactions, would go to ruin."). Cf., n.55, above. For my treatment of a strikingly similar appeal to *lokavyavahāra* on the part of Candrakīrti, see Arnold 2001b (which represents an earlier version of arguments treated in Chapter 5 of the present dissertation). A study of this kind of appeal to *lokavyavahāra* as characteristic of Indian philosophy more generally is, it seems to me, a desideratum.

[171] Cf., this passage from John Henry Newman (1870: 294), whose *Essay in Aid of a Grammar of Assent* represents a seldom-cited precursor to Alston's argument: "... there are writers who seem to have gone far beyond this reasonable scepticism, laying down as a general proposition that we have no right in philosophy to make any assumption whatever, and that we ought to begin with a universal doubt. This, however, is of all assumptions the greatest, and to forbid assumptions universally is to forbid this one in particular. Doubt itself is a positive state, and implies a definite habit of mind, and thereby necessarily involves a system of principles and doctrines all its own. Again, if nothing is to be assumed, what is our very method of reasoning but an assumption? and what our nature itself?" This point is strikingly similar to the one developed at length by Michael Williams (1996).

Is a *text*, that is, really comparable to an *experience*?

It seems to me that the way Śabara sets up this whole discourse is relevant to this question; for Śabara particularly emphasizes that for an utterance to "say" something is for it to "cause one to be aware," and that an utterance therefore becomes "the cause of (someone's) being aware" (*braviti-ity ucyate 'vabodhayati, budhyamānasya nimittaṃ bhavati iti*). But does a textual utterance really "cause one to be aware" in just the same way as, say, a perception does? Is the experience of hearing a proposition precisely analogous to the experience of seeing a tree? Here, it is relevant to consider Alston's answer to one objection his project is likely to meet: surely it is an absurd consequence of Alston's proposal that we are left with no choice but to credit the prima facie justified status of beliefs issuing from, say, the practice of astrology. Alston's answer to this objection turns on a clarification of what he means by "doxastic practice"; for his contention is that systems such as astrology represent not basic "belief-forming practices," but rather, higher-order theories or conceptual frameworks that are used to interpret and order beliefs that are more basically formed.[172]

There seems to me to be some question whether or not Alston's distinction here can be sustained, and particularly in such a way that we can still understand, say, "Christian Mystical Practice" as the properly basic sort of thing Alston seems to intend by "doxastic practice."[173] Whether or not it is tenable, though, Alston's point here

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[172] Personal communication.

[173] This is, moreover, not the only problem Alston's proposal seems to me to face. More problematic, in my view, is Alston's contention that different doxastic practices must be individuated from one another, such that their "outputs" are only ever subject to falsification according to criteria *internal to* the practices. Alston thus wants to maintain that we should count as significant overriders only those belief-outputs that are "appropriate" to the respective practices – and, perhaps not surprisingly, these turn out to be the outputs that are generated *within* the practice in question: "the criteria of justification are quite different for different doxastic practices, and only confusion results from an attempt to subject the outputs of one practice to the standards of another, without good reason for supposing that those standards carry over." (220) Thus, "to a large extent at least, the practice supplies both the tester and the testee; it grades its own examinations. There is a certain circularity involved in supporting the choice of tests. One has to use the practice, including the tests in question, to show that these tests are the right ones to use. Choosing tests [is] an 'inside' job. And this circularity attaches as fully to universal practices like [perception] that are taken, in practice, to be unproblematic, as it does to controversial practices like CMP." (217)

Thus, the extent to which Alston's individuation of doxastic practices is empirically adequate

suggests an important difference between his cases of "experience of God," and Śabara's case of the awareness produced by a Vedic injunction: insofar as higher-order judgments (and specifically, *hermeneutical* judgments) must already have been made in order for Vedic injunctions to be meaningful, surely participation in the Vedic practice would, on Alston's view, count as something more like the deployment of a higher-order theory or conceptual scheme, than like a basic "doxastic practice." We can avoid putting

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becomes quite significant, since these analytic cuts provide us not only with the objects of our inquiry, *but also with the criteria for evaluating them.* When it comes to his application of his epistemological conclusions to specifically "mystical" practices, then, Alston's project becomes more problematic, and I would shift the burden of proof back to him; for now *he* must show, more persuasively than he has, that doxastic practices are as neatly separable as he takes them to be, and that criteria for evaluating them must indeed be taken from *within* them. That he may not be able to show this is suggested, it seems to me, by the "problem of religious diversity." In regard to this, Alston seems to me to be astute in his characterization of it as a problem: "But when practice boundaries are crossed in the exchange things become stickier. Now a question arises for the recipient as to whether the practice in question is an acceptable one, and that introduces additional possibilities for doubt, error and lack of justification." (283) That is, even if we grant that we would be prima facie justified in taking the outputs of CMP as reliable, the fact of religious diversity forces the question of whether *this* (e.g., the Christian and not the Vedic) is the doxastic practice we should be committed to. And I would suggest – contra Alston's assurance that "our fragmented and spiritually impoverished society is not at all typical" with respect to the more usual situation of some religion's being "normally acquired and engaged in well before one is explicitly aware of the practice as such and before one comes to reflect critically on it" (187) – that perhaps the problem of religious diversity is not so new and unprecedented as it seems; that perhaps it would not be very easy to individuate, with respect to *any* historical situation, the doxastic practices that obtain. In any case, it seems clear that a judgment on this empirical question turns out to be quite important for Alston's position. (For further critical reflections on Alston, cf., the symposium on his book in volume 54 of *Philosophy and Phenomenological Research*, of which the piece by Richard Gale [cf., n.156, above] is a part. See also Brown 1993. The latter article seems to me to make a point similar to the one I have just suggested, but I am not altogether sure I fully understand Brown's argument.)

Mīmāṃsakas might themselves be said to have faced a somewhat comparable problem in their attempts to individuate the Vedas as authoritative with respect to dharma. This is particularly clear in the commentarial literature stemming from the section of Śabara's *bhāṣya* dealing with *smṛti* (i.e., the *smṛtipāda*). In this branch of the discourse, Mīmāṃsakas addressed the status of the many texts classified as *smṛti* (i.e., traditionally passed down, as opposed to the Vedas, which are *śruti*, "heard" or "revealed"). Insofar as there was reluctance to disallow the authoritative status of all *smṛti* texts, it was argued in some quarters that *smṛti* texts derive their authority from some *śruti* text upon which they are based. That is, the authority of any *smṛti* text was based in an inferable relation to some *śruti* text. This gave rise to the further problem that not all of the *smṛti* texts which Mīmāṃsakas might wish to retain had an obvious basis in any specifiable *śruti*. One response to this situation was to hold that the category of "Veda" exceeds the received *text* of the Vedas; that is, we might sometimes be justified in inferring the existence of a *śruti* text as warranting some *smṛti* text, even where the former is no longer to be found in the Veda as it has come down to us. (On these issues, cf., Halbfass 1991: 60: "Kumārila himself works with the assumption of forgotten Vedic texts as ultimate legitimizers of traditions, which are recognized as orthodox without having a demonstrable basis in the extant Vedic texts...." For some very insightful remarks on this whole line of argument, see Pollock 1989, 1990.) The need to discuss this issue might be evidence of the problem I have identified in Alston – i.e., the problem of presupposing that the Vedas (or anything else) can be individuated as the uniquely relevant criterion for some specifiable range of concern. Thus, Śabara can reasonably claim that we do not require other, perceptual grounds for being justified in crediting a Vedic injunction to attain heaven by means of sacrifice, since perception cannot be shown to confer essentially greater justification than any other *pramāṇa*; it is, however, another thing to claim that *no conceivable perception could count for anything* with respect to this question.

this point in terms of Alston's possibly problematic distinction, though, simply by emphasizing that texts do not (as Śabara's example seems to require) simply and straightforwardly "produce" awareness; if, as Alston claims, perceptual awarenesses can be characterized by a preconceptual sort of presentational immediacy, it is nevertheless the case that any involvement with textual practices (such as entertaining a proposition like "*svargakāmo yajeta*") *necessarily* involves interpretation – in which case, it is necessarily the case that we must already presuppose some conceptual background of prior understanding, what Gadamer calls a "preunderstanding." Thus, I have elaborated in this essay a sympathetic characterization of some arguments that cut not only against the Buddhist Epistemologists, but also against the Enlightenment legacy of epistemology as "first philosophy." I am now suggesting, in effect, that a complete picture would require that we also press a critique of Enlightenment notions of hermeneutics. Thus, we can (and would perhaps do well to) accept the Mīmāṃsakas' reformed epistemology; and yet still hold, with Gadamer, that insofar as understanding always necessarily takes place in the context of some tradition, Vedic utterances could never be expected to make the same kind of claim upon us (unless, perhaps, we are already Mīmāṃsakas) as sensory perception.

It is, perhaps, only fitting that we should wind up faced with the question of interpretation; for as I mentioned at the very beginning of this essay, the constitutive concern of the tradition of Mīmāṃsā is with hermeneutical questions of Vedic interpretation. It is, finally, the fact that we cannot bracket matters of interpretation that can best help us to appreciate the limitations of the Mīmāṃsakas' deployment of the doctrine of intrinsic validity. In approaching the matter from this angle, I am circumventing what many contemporary readers are likely to regard as the more pressing problem with the Mīmāṃsaka project: namely, the alleged "transcendence" (*apauruṣeyatva*) of the Vedas, and the concomitant issue of falsifiability. Thus, in the

last passage we considered from Pārthasārathi, he presses upon us the conclusion that Mīmāṃsakas uniformly want to uphold: once we allow that prima facie validity attaches to the Veda, the Mīmāṃsakas win the day, since, "because of the absence of awareness of faults in [the Veda's] cause, [the Veda] becomes established without exception." It becomes, then, quite important that the Veda is characterized, for Mīmāṃsakas, by its *apauruṣeyatva* – that is, by its "authorlessness," its eternality and transcendence; for what is held to establish the Veda as *uniquely* authoritative ("without exception") is the fact that it has associated with it no conceivable source of falsification. This is because the Veda is paradigmatically an instance of the *pramāṇa* known as *śabda*, i.e., "language" or "testimony." And the source of potential overriders of awareness engendered by this *pramāṇa* is invariably the agent who is speaking, with defects (e.g., mendaciousness) in the agent being the only kind of thing our awareness of which can falsify the initial awareness. But since the Veda has no author, *there is no agent* behind it who can serve as the locus of falsifying defects. Hence, it stands as the only producer of awareness that can never be falsified.

This claim is not at all incidental to the Mīmāṃsaka project, and any comprehensive assessment of their arguments would need to address it. Sheldon Pollock has aptly expressed the way that many contemporary philosophical readers are likely to understand the deployment of the doctrine of intrinsic validity as it is combined with this claim: "The commitment to falsifiability (*without Popper's corollary that what is not falsifiable cannot count as true)* renders the truth claims of a transcendent source of knowledge – revelation – inviolable."[174] I am certainly inclined to agree that this is a

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[174] Pollock 1989: 607 (emphasis mine). Taber seems sympathetic with this way of characterizing the argument, noting that "it seems there could be no cause more defective than a non-existent one!" (Taber 1992: 217; Taber goes on to cite Pollock's observation) Pollock puts this more strongly elsewhere, saying that, for Mīmāṃsakas, the unique status of the Veda "rests on a Mīmāṃsā epistemology that ascribes truth to what is not falsified (*the embarrassment of unfalsifiability being ignored*)." (Pollock 1980: 318; emphasis mine) The comparison with Popper has also been ventured by Lars Göhler (1994), who makes essentially the same point as Pollock (see especially p.83), but this piece is so poorly written and edited as

problematic move, and that the absence of "Popper's corollary" is indeed a problem for the Mīmāṃsakas.[175] It is, however, notoriously difficult to *argue* that this is a problem, and it is difficult to imagine making the case that falsifiability is in principle necessary without smuggling any verificationist assumptions back into the epistemology that Alston and Pārthasārathi have so effectively evacuated of such. Moreover, it turns out that there is, in an important sense, still room here for falsification, after all; for even one who allowed that the Vedas are by definition inerrant would still be faced with the task of *understanding* them – in which case, the burden is shifted back to the hermeneutical practices of the Mīmāṃsakas. That is, even if it is agreed that the Vedas cannot possibly be the source of any error, problems may nevertheless ensue (and may falsify the human *practices* based on Vedic injunctions) due to human failures properly to *understand* what the Veda enjoins.

There is, then, an important distinction between, on one hand, the Veda-*an-sich* (i.e., even if one agrees that it is characterized by *apauruṣeyatva*), and, on the other, how people understand it and what they decide to do about that understanding. Given this distinction, there seem to me to be two main avenues (apart from the question of

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to add nothing of value.

Cf., also, Eli Franco's remarks apropos of the skepticism of Jayarāśi, who similarly protested the Mīmāṃsaka appeal to something unfalsifiable. Franco makes (only to rather lamely disavow) the same comparison with Popper: "One of the basic principles in Popper's philosophy of science is that a hypothesis can never be confirmed. The scientific hypotheses we hold to be true are only those which are not yet refuted, but they are liable to be so sometime in the future. When we conduct a scientific experiment in order to check a hypothesis, we can either refute or corroborate it, but never confirm it. Jayarāśi's argument is based, I think, on a similar idea, but, of course [of course!], I do not mean to make a comparison between the two philosophers. This simply illustrates that similar ideas can arise in entirely different contexts." (Franco 1987: 27-8) I don't know what this is if not "a comparison between the two philosophers."

[175] Moreover, I suspect that Alston might concur; for Alston is committed to the view that among the things that qualifies perceptions of God as significantly like "sensory perception" is the fact that, like instances of the latter, the former is subject to being overridden (i.e., *falsified*), albeit, only by other outputs of the same practice. Thus, while I have (in n.173, above) faulted Alston for the sharpness with which he claims he can individuate doxastic practices (and for his consequent confidence that we can know which outputs count as being from "within" the practices related to perceiving God), it is nevertheless significant that he provides for the possibility of overriding the very practices he is interested in defending. If Alston is right to consider the provision of falsification significant (and I think he is), then the Mīmāṃsakas thus deprive Vedic injunction of one of the key features (viz., being subject to falsification) in virtue of which it might otherwise have qualified as significantly like other *pramāṇas*.

falsifiability, which I have set aside for now) available for arguing that even if the doctrine of intrinsic validity represents a formidable epistemology, we should not feel compelled by Mīmāṃsaka deployments thereof to assent to claims regarding the uniquely authoritative status of the Vedas. One of these involves noting that, in light of the need for correctly understanding Vedic injunctions, significant authority attaches to those who are charged with interpreting the Veda (i.e., the Mīmāṃsakas!). Here, then, we see the pernicious aspect of Alston's requirement that only the religious practices in question can provide sources of potential falsification[176]; for the individuation of doxastic practices which this requirement entails may turn out, in fact, to be effected simply by those with the power to do so. Thus, it seems that what qualifies a religious doxastic practice as one that can be individuated as the kind of "firmly established doxastic practice" that Alston considers valid, is simply the power and authority to "firmly establish" it. Even if Vedic *practices* (i.e., practices that are represented as executing what is enjoined by the Vedic texts) are subject to being overridden, then, they are thus susceptible only to the outputs of the Veda itself – and only, moreover, *as those outputs are certified by such authoritative interpreters of the Veda as the Mīmāṃsakas*. One might therefore fault the Mīmāṃsaka position on the grounds of an ideology critique.[177]

The other main avenue of critique, it seems to me, involves simply emphasizing what I have already indicated: contra Śabara, texts do not simply *produce* experience (*avabodhayati*); rather, they must first be interpreted and understood, and this will always and necessarily be against the background of some prior understanding. Specifically,

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[176] Cf., n.173, above.

[177] Something like this might be said to be the line of argument attributed to the Cārvāka Bṛhaspati, who is represented in the *Sarvadarśanasaṃgraha* as arguing thus: "The *agnihotra*, the three Vedas, the [ascetic's] three staffs, smearing [of one's body] with ashes – all these are invented by a maker, producing the livelihood of those who lack vigor and intelligence.... they have been introduced by the Brahmins as a way of making a living." (text in the Ānandāśrama edition, p.5: *agnihotraṃ trayovedās tridaṇḍaṃ bhasmaguṇṭanam / buddhipauruṣahinānāṃ jīvikā dhātṛnirmitā // ... tataś ca jīvanopāyo brāhmaṇair vihitas tv iha /*)

understanding of the Vedic injunction as making a claim upon one can only finally be made against the background of a prior understanding of what Pollock has aptly characterized as the "essential a priori of Mīmāṃsā"; that is, the stipulative definition of *dharma* "as a transcendent entity, and so ... unknowable by any form of knowledge not itself transcendent."[178] That is, in order to understand the injunction "*svargakāmo yajeta*" as making a claim upon one, it must already be understood that, inter alia, heaven (specifically as understood by the Mīmāṃsakas) *is the kind of thing we ought to desire*. Without a complex axiological framework already in place, then, Vedic injunctions will not have any purchase.

If a Buddhist Epistemologist does not have good reason for judging Vedic practices irrational, then, she still may not have good reason for *adopting* them. The doxastic epistemologies of Alston and Pārthasārathimiśra are thus effectively deployed to argue that religious beliefs are rationally held and religious activities rationally engaged in, insofar as there is no privileged class of awareness that must invariably be sought as a higher court of appeals. These epistemological arguments do not (and probably *cannot*), however, give us any reason for *choosing* these practices. This is not necessarily to deny that there might be other arguments to the effect that some axiological commitments are preferable to others – only that the epistemological arguments do not accomplish this. If one were really intent on pressing a critique of the Mīmāṃsakas, then, surely the most promising way to do so would be on axiological grounds. I hope to have shown, however, that we are entitled to conclude that the specifically epistemological critiques of Mīmāṃsā that have been ventured by critics traditional and modern – by, for example, Śāntarakṣita and Kamalaśīla, Matilal and Mohanty – miss the mark, and fail to appreciate what a formidable epistemological reform the Mīmāṃsakas have effected.

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[178] Cf., n.20, above.

CHAPTER 4
Transcendental Argument and *A Priori* Justification: Candrakīrti's Critique of Buddhist Epistemology, Part 1: *Svalakṣaṇas*

4.i. Introduction: On reading Candrakīrti as making transcendental arguments

Nāgārjuna's *Mūlamadhyamakakārikā* (*MMK*), the foundational text for the Madhyamaka school of Buddhist philosophy, is available to us today in the original Sanskrit only as it has been embedded in Candrakīrti's *Prasannapadā*, which in turn is the only commentary on Nāgārjuna's text known to have survived in the original Sanskrit.[1] While Candrakīrti, in turn, is often represented as having had little influence on the subsequent development of Indian philosophy,[2] that fact alone might nevertheless suffice to commend his work to our attention. It is also the case, however, that Candrakīrti's works came to be of central importance in the Tibetan understanding and appropriation of Indian Madhyamaka,[3] and it can plausibly be argued (as indeed I would argue) that Candrakīrti is the most exegetically faithful of Nāgārjuna's interpreters. Clearly, then, an assessment of Candrakīrti's thought is important to any comprehensive attempt to understand Indian Madhyamaka.

In this regard, it is well known that the first chapter of Candrakīrti's *Prasannapadā* is of particular importance, as this chapter comprises some of Candrakīrti's most extensive and systematic engagement with what he took to be

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[1] Cf., Ruegg 1981: 1, n.3. Ruegg's remains the best survey of the corpus of literature relevant to the study of Madhyamaka thought.

[2] A view that does not, however, take account of Candrakīrti's considerable influence on such later thinkers as Abhayākaragupta.

[3] Cf., *inter alia*, Lang 1992, which focuses on sPa-tshab nyi-ma-grags, the Tibetan translator chiefly responsible for the excellent Tibetan translations of Candrakīrti's *Prasannapadā* and *Madhyamakāvatāra*.

alternative understandings of Madhyamaka, and of Buddhist thought more generally.[4] Here, then, we can expect to find a clear indication of precisely how Candrakīrti understood the distinctiveness of Nāgārjuna's approach. What is most well known, in this respect, is Candrakīrti's lengthy engagement with the works of Buddhapālita and Bhāvaviveka, two earlier commentators on Nāgārjuna whose works are now extant only in Tibetan translation. Buddhapālita had summarized Nāgārjuna's arguments as being of the *reductio ad absurdum* type – that is, as using his opponents' own premises to saddle them with unwanted consequences (*prasaṅga*). Bhāvaviveka, in turn, had urged that Buddhapālita's approach was insufficient, and had faulted him for not also restating Nāgārjuna's arguments in terms of independent syllogisms (*svatantra-anumāna*). Much of the first chapter of Candrakīrti's *Prasannapadā* is devoted to defending Buddhapālita, with much of Candrakīrti's polemical attention accordingly directed at Bhāvaviveka. The first chapter of the *Prasannapadā* has thus become the *locus classicus* for what the Tibetan tradition came to emphasize as the split between the "Svātantrika" and "Prāsaṅgika" schools of Madhyamaka – that is, between (respectively) the school that follows Bhāvaviveka in deploying the dialectical tools of syllogistic reasoning, and the school that follows Buddhapālita and Candrakīrti in understanding this deployment to compromise Nāgārjuna's insights. Perhaps following the emphasis of the Tibetan tradition, most contemporary scholars have been principally concerned to understand this aspect of Candrakīrti's opening chapter.[5]

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[4] The first chapter of the *Prasannapadā* was translated into English by Stcherbatsky (1927), whose work is dated and in some ways eccentric, but still very useful. There is still no complete translation of the *Prasannapadā* into any Western language, though the translation of Sprung (1979) is close. Sprung, however, was particularly influenced by Stcherbatsky's translation, and his work is in some ways deeply problematic; cf., the reviews by de Jong (1981) and Steinkellner (1982). Steinkellner goes so far as to say that Sprung's translation represents "rather a setback than a step forward towards promoting the general knowledge of the Middle Way" (p.414). Other Western-language translations from the *Prasannapadā* (e.g., those of May [1959] and Schayer [1931]) do not include the first chapter. We can eagerly anticipate the work of Anne MacDonald, who is currently preparing a new edition and translation of the first chapter; cf., MacDonald 2000.

[5] There is some debate whether the terms *svātantrika* (Tib., *rang rgyud pa*) and *prāsaṅgika* (Tib., *thal 'gyur ba*) are attested in any Indian sources, but it is generally thought that this terminology was in fact

What has much less often been appreciated is that the first chapter of the *Prasannapadā* also includes a lengthy engagement with an unnamed interlocutor whose thought looks very much like that of Dignāga, the progenitor of the school of "Buddhist Epistemology." In the standard edition of the *Prasannapadā*, this section spans some twenty pages.[6] Typical of the neglect of this section is the fact that, while it thus constitutes more than a fifth of Candrakīrti's opening chapter, Cesare Rizzi's 36-page summary of the chapter devotes a scant two pages to this "controversy with the Buddhist Logicians."[7] This neglect perhaps owes something to the fact that some influential Tibetan discussions of at least parts of this section take Candrakīrti to have been continuing his attack on *Bhāvaviveka*, so that what is quite likely an engagement with Dignāga's epistemology gets subsumed in the *svātantrika-prāsaṅgika* discussion that has instead preoccupied most scholars.[8]

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introduced by the Tibetans; cf., Ruegg 1981: 58, ff. Lopez 1987 provides a translation of a dGe-lugs-pa scholastic textbook's analysis of the Svātantrika-Prāsaṅgika distinction, and Lopez's introduction provides an unusually clear account of what these Tibetans took to be at stake. Other significant works on this subject are by Tom Tillemans (1992, 2000) and, most recently and comprehensively, Kodo Yotsuya (1999). Sara McClintock and Georges Dreyfus (forthcoming) are currently editing a volume of recent contributions to this discussion. The works of William Ames (1986, 1993, 1994) and Akira Saito (1984) provide useful points of access to some of the relevant works of Buddhapālita and Bhāvaviveka.

[6] The standard edition is that of Louis de La Vallée Poussin (1970b), which was printed as volume IV in the Bibliotheca Buddhica series. Based on additional manuscripts from Nepal, J. W. de Jong (1978) suggested extensive revisions to this edition. All translations in the present chapter are my own, and are from the edition of La Vallée Poussin as revised by de Jong (with de Jong's changes noted). (The edition of Vaidya [1960], which provides the pagination from the Biliotheca Buddhica edition, can be used, but is effectively just a reprinting of La Vallée Poussin's edition without La Vallée Poussin's extraordinarily erudite and helpful footnotes. Vaidya can, though, prove useful for his judgments regarding which of La Vallée Poussin's variants to adopt. The recent edition of Dwarikadas Shastri [1989] seems simply to reproduce Vaidya's edition, and takes no account of de Jong's revisions.) In La Vallée Poussin's edition, the engagement with Dignāga runs from 55.11 to 75.13 (with references thus being to page and line numbers), with the entire first chapter spanning 91 pages. I have provided a complete translation of pp.55.11-75.13 as Appendix II.

[7] Rizzi 1987. The bulk of Rizzi's short book (pp.23-59) consists in what is usually a detailed paraphrase of the first chapter of the *Prasannapadā*; Rizzi's account of the section that will concern us is at pp.47-49.

[8] For the view that Candrakīrti is still occupied with Bhāvaviveka in at least part of the section I will consider, cf., Thurman 1991: 292-295 (and especially p.293, n.13); this translates a section of Tsong-kha-pa's *Legs bshad snying po* that addresses (and quotes extensively from) a discussion occurring at pp.66.1-68.4 of the *Prasannapadā*. Cf., also, Eckel 1978, who similarly follows Tsong-kha-pa's lead in taking this section to be addressed to Bhāvaviveka. A more comprehensive and nuanced account of one Tibetan reception of the passage in question is to be found in Yoshimizu 1996. Stcherbatsky (1927) understood this whole section of the *Prasannapadā* (i.e., pp.55.11-75.13) to have been addressing Dignāga, introducing his translation of it (p.142) as a "Controversy about the Validity of Logic," and characterizing Candrakīrti's

Whatever the reason, this neglect is regrettable; for in fact, as I will suggest, it is at least as important to Candrakīrti's approach that he refuse epistemological projects such as Dignāga's, as it is that he refuse Bhāvaviveka's contentions. Indeed, I will argue that an understanding of Candrakīrti's engagement with the Buddhist Epistemologist affords us an unusually good opportunity for appreciating the logically distinct character of Candrakīrti's Madhyamaka. This distinctive character is immediately clear from the fact that, while (as we have seen) the Mīmāṃsakas challenge the Buddhist Epistemologists on something like their own terms (that is, inverting the logic of their position, while yet remaining recognizably in the field of *pramāṇavāda*), Candrakīrti's approach consists instead in a principled refusal of the whole epistemological discussion (a subversion of its logic, as it were). This principled refusal to be drawn into the epistemological debate is, it seems to me, wholly consistent with Candrakīrti's works – which is to say that this refusal is a natural outgrowth of both his understanding of the Buddhist enterprise, and specifically of the way he thought this enterprise required that we argue for it.

To show how Candrakīrti's engagement with the Buddhist Epistemologist thus affords us a glimpse of the logically distinctive character of Candrakīrti's arguments, as

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pūrvapakṣin as "The Logician." (Stcherbatsky's translation of this section is at pp.142-174.) Hattori (1968) also understands Candrakīrti to have been addressing Dignāga, and his annotations to his translation from Dignāga's *Pramāṇasamuccaya* frequently provide useful cross-references to Candrakīrti. The only other sustained treatments of this section that I have been able to find are those of Mookerjee (1957: 42-58; this is basically a paraphrase of Candrakīrti's text) and Siderits (1981), who also takes Candrakīrti's target here to be Dignāga.

Recently, an interesting bit of evidence regarding Candrakīrti's *pūrvapakṣin* has come to light: Yoshiyasu Yonezawa (1999, 2001) has been preparing a critical edition of the **Lakṣaṇaṭīkā*, from a Sanskrit manuscript in Tibetan *dbu-med* script, recovered at Zha lu monastery by Rāhula Sāṅkṛtyāyana (cf., Sāṅkṛtyāyana 1937: 35). This very brief commentary on the *Prasannapadā*, Yonezawa speculates, was probably written under the supervision of Abhayākaragupta (2001: 27), which would place it in roughly the 12th century. Among the things which this concise commentary does is identify the various unnamed interlocutors, and with regard to the section that will concern us, the anonymous author of this commentary specifically identifies Dignāga; cf., n.51, below. (I would like to thank Prof. Yonezawa for sharing this information with me.) It is, to be sure, nevertheless possible that Candrakīrti is chiefly interested in Dignāga to the extent that Dignāga influenced Bhāvaviveka. Be that as it may, I will argue that Candrakīrti has good reasons for finding the epistemological project of Dignāga in principle problematic. In this and the following chapter, though, I will simply identify Candrakīrti's unnamed interlocutor as the "Buddhist Epistemologist," and will leave the task of suggesting that it is in fact Dignāga for the annotated translation to be found in Appendix II.

well as how that fact coheres with his larger body of works, I will proceed in this and in the following chapter by highlighting several key moves in this lengthy passage from the first chapter of the *Prasannapadā*, many sections of which can (and will) usefully be correlated with (or supplemented by) other salient passages from Candrakīrti's oeuvre – and chiefly, with passages from the sixth chapter of his independent work, the *Madhyamakāvatāra*. The present chapter will center on Candrakīrti's critique of the Epistemologist's understanding of *svalakṣaṇas* (on the proper translation of which, more in due course), while the following chapter will address his critique of the Epistemologist's doctrine of perception (*pratyakṣa*). (An annotated translation of the entire passage is then given in Appendix II.) My exposition in these chapters, perhaps more than was the case in my elaboration of the Mīmāṃsaka arguments, will involve an effort at "rational reconstruction." That is, I will be attentive to what Tom Tillemans (following Imre Lakatos) has characterized as a distinction between "internal" and "external history," where the former involves "logical deductions of what could have been said, given the key ideas of the philosopher in question, the latter being what was actually said, what actually took place."[9] If the proposed reconstruction does not always find explicit warrant in Candrakīrti's works, then, the claim is nevertheless that it logically coheres with them (and indeed, is perhaps even logically required by them).

I believe, however, that the interpretation I have in mind is warranted by Candrakīrti's works, though this reconstruction is in terms of some post-Kantian philosophical categories which, not having been in play in Candrakīrti's context (i.e., that

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[9] Tillemans 1992: 312; Tillemans follows Lakatos 1971. Tillemans quite rightly observes: "In this light, there is no doubt that Tsoṅ kha pa, the great debater, was a specialist at internal history...." Cf., also, Oetke 1992, who notes, apropos of his explication of Vasubandhu's *Viṃśatikā*, that "Vagueness and indeterminacy of beliefs or intentions should have the same right of being considered as constituting possible characteristics of a philosophical doctrine or a tradition and as falling within the scope of the description of the hermeneutical disciplines as what has been said, believed and intended or feared, hoped, desired etc." (p.222) Based on this observation, Oetke speaks of a text's "aiming at" some objective, noting that "Descriptions of what is aimed at in a text or by an author constitute a level of text-interpretation of its own." (p.224)

of seventh-century Indian philosophy), naturally could not have been explicitly stated as such. Specifically, my contention is that the logically distinctive character of Candrakīrti's arguments is best appreciated if we understand Candrakīrti to have been making *transcendental arguments*. A transcendental argument is typically understood as an argument whose conclusion, if true, is necessarily true – and this because the conclusion of such an argument is proposed as a *condition of the possibility* of some indisputable fact about us and our mental life (such as that we have experiences, use language, understand one another, etc.).[10] A distinctive feature of such arguments, as I understand them, is their urging that one cannot argue against their claims without already presupposing them (and hence, without contradicting oneself). In other words, if, (1), it is persuasively argued that the conclusion in question is indeed a condition of the possibility of some widely observed phenomenon, and, (2), the latter phenomenon is of sufficient generality that it must come into play in the context of any argument, then a condition of the possibility even of denying the argument would be the truth of its claims.

Another way to characterize such arguments is to invoke the controversial but storied distinction between *a posteriori* and *a priori* modes of epistemic justification – that is, the distinction between justification based, respectively, on appeal to some kind of experience, and that based on some necessarily obtaining condition that can (so it is claimed) be discovered simply through the exercise of reason. Transcendental arguments typically involve appeal to the latter mode, functioning to cut short any appeal to experience by arguing that a condition of the possibility of any experience (any experience, that is, such as an empiricist might invoke to justify a belief) is precisely the

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[10] So, for example, Stern (2000: 6): "As standardly presented, transcendental arguments are usually said to be distinctive in involving a certain sort of claim, namely that 'For *Y* to be possible, *X* must be the case', where *Y* is some indisputable fact about us and our mental life (e.g. that we have experiences, use language, make certain judgements, have certain concepts, perform certain actions, etc.), but where it is left open at this stage exactly what is substituted for *X*." On the subject of transcendental arguments, see also the volume of contributions edited by Stern (1999), which includes (pp.307-321) a fairly comprehensive bibliography.

state of affairs putatively disclosed by the transcendental argument. As Laurence BonJour points out, "Understood in this way, the concept of a priori justification is an essentially negative concept, specifying as it does what the justification of the belief does *not* depend on, but saying nothing about what it does depend on."[11] This idea, I suggest, neatly captures the logic of Candrakīrti's attempt to circumvent the Epistemologist's demand for justification. Thus, Candrakīrti argues, in effect, that what is for him the governing notion (viz., emptiness) is to be understood not as a *property* that existents happen to possess, and that could be encountered in experience; rather, it is an abstract state of affairs which is a *condition of the possibility of existents* (and of any experience thereof) – a fact that can be discovered simply by reducing to absurdity any argument that presupposes otherwise.[12] Candrakīrti's "*prāsaṅgika*" method, in other words, involves *a priori* analysis simply of the concepts presupposed by his interlocutors, in order to show that their demands for justification founder on the incoherence of those concepts.

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[11] BonJour 1995: 30.

[12] Paul Griffiths (1998) particularly emphasizes the mode of *necessity* that is involved in transcendental arguments, and thus assimilates the Buddhist Epistemologists' formal criteria (specifically as they are exemplified by Mokṣākaragupta) to the case of transcendental arguments, such that he can characterize Mokṣākaragupta's as "transcendental" arguments simply insofar as they "require a strong notion of *sambandha*, of logical necessity" (1998: 191). (In connection with the idea of such a logically necessary *sambandha*, cf., my discussion in Chapter 2 of Dharmakīrti's turn from Dignāga's wholly inductive method.) It seems to me that if we also emphasize the criterion of a transcendental claim's characteristically involving a *condition of the possibility* of something, then our understanding of transcendental arguments ought to include the recognition that a "condition of the possibility" of something is itself logically distinct from the other "properties" it may have. It seems to me that Gamwell (1990: 101-2) lucidly captures this: "... a valid transcendental claim is a claim about the conditions or characteristics of human subjectivity (a claim of the form, 'some or all human subjects are *X*') that is self-referentially valid or self-validating in the sense that its validity is a condition of its own logical possibility. The logical possibility of the claim 'refers to' or implies the validity of the claim.... It then follows that the denial of a valid transcendental claim is self-referentially invalid or self-refuting in the sense that its invalidity is a condition of its own putative logical possibility. The putative possibility it seeks to formulate could not identify the characteristics of any human subject unless the denial is invalid." If this is right, then it seems to me that Dharmakīrti's and Mokṣākaragupta's putatively necessary *sambandha* does not alone qualify theirs as properly transcendental arguments. To the extent that my proposed reconstruction successfully thematizes the logically distinctive character of Candrakīrti's arguments, then, it would be misleading to think that the Buddhist Epistemologists could also be deploying transcendental arguments. That is, while it may be possible to characterize certain moves of the Epistemologists as transcendental moves, I am here proposing an understanding of transcendental arguments that is particularly intended to highlight Candrakīrti's *differences* from the Epistemologists. If this reconstruction turns out to be unconvincing, and turns out not effectively to preclude the characterization of the Epistemologists as similarly deploying such arguments, it nevertheless seems to me that it would disclose something interesting about transcendental logic to explain why such is the case. More on this in concluding Chapter 5.

Understanding Candrakīrti as making transcendental arguments has several advantages. First of all, this provides a useful way to see how his critique of the Buddhist Epistemologist in fact relates quite coherently with what might be thought to be Candrakīrti's more characteristic arguments concerning emptiness (*śūnyatā*). Thus, I will argue that Candrakīrti's understanding of the Buddhist project is one such that the "ultimate" it posits is best thought of as *transcendental* to existents (and to any experience or analyses thereof). Since the ultimate thus posited has fundamentally to do with the necessarily interdependent character of existents, Candrakīrti's view therefore is that any philosophical approach that abstracts things (such as *pramāṇas* and *prameyas*) from their mutually interdependent context has already, *ipso facto*, compromised precisely the point that should be made *about* that context; viz., that it is characterized by interdependence. This insight represents, it seems to me, the logic that underlies the entirety of the exchange with the Epistemologist, and it is what makes Candrakīrti's critique here not (as many scholars seem to have assumed) a negligible tangent, but rather, a move that is coherent with (and possibly required by) what are thought to be Candrakīrti's more characteristic concerns.

That this is the best rational reconstruction of Candrakīrti's arguments is also evident, I will argue, from the extent to which it can help us make sense of what might otherwise seem to be some serious interpretive difficulties in Candrakīrti's works. Specifically, this understanding of Candrakīrti's procedure can greatly advance our understanding of the perennially vexing issue of whether or not Mādhyamikas have a "thesis," and the related issue of whether or not Madhyamaka is vulnerable to charges of self-referential incoherence. These issues should become clear in due course, but for now, suffice to say that characterizing Candrakīrti as having made transcendental arguments can help us reframe the "thesis" question as one concerning *different kinds of justification*. This will mean, among other things, reading the challenge that Candrakīrti

attributes to the Epistemologist as a kind of skeptical challenge, and Candrakīrti's response (like most transcendental arguments) as reflecting the insight that, as Robert Stern puts it, the best way to meet the skeptic's challenge might

> not be to set out to refute him, by answering him in his own terms, but rather to question those terms themselves ... [by] demonstrating the artificiality of the constraints within which the sceptic is working, and which he has inherited from the epistemological tradition of which he is part ... undercut[ting] the 'large piece of philosophizing' on which the sceptical position is built, but which the sceptic leaves unquestioned. It is in thereby turning the game played by scepticism against itself.[13]

Against this background, the characterization of Candrakīrti's as transcendental arguments will facilitate my contention that Candrakīrti's claims regarding emptiness amount to *metaphysical claims* – with the passages in Candrakīrti that are otherwise difficult to reconcile being precisely the passages where this fact is most clearly evident. That is, Candrakīrti in several places emphasizes that emptiness obtains *universally*, and indeed that it is the atemporal "essence" of all existents[14] – a fact which many expositors of Candrakīrti find inconvenient for their interpretations, but which fits well with the reconstruction I am proposing. Understanding Candrakīrti as making properly metaphysical claims flies in the face of many interpretations of Madhyamaka, according to which it is *Mādhyamikas* who are "skeptics."[15] Candrakīrti's major contention contra the Epistemologist, then, is that a proper understanding of Candrakīrti's metaphysical claims does not require the kind of justification that the Epistemologist thinks is necessary (viz., warranting by some accredited *pramāṇa*) – and indeed that the very

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[13] Stern 2000: 4-5. Stern cites Kant's *Critique of Pure Reason* (B276), where Kant characterizes his generally transcendental procedure as one in which "the game played by idealism has been turned against itself, and with greater justice."

[14] I will have more to say on what I am (following Paul Griffiths) thus characterizing as "metaphysical predicates" in the next chapter; cf., Chapter 5, n49.

[15] Such is the view, for example, of Richard P. Hayes, who suggests that Nāgārjuna and Dignāga are alike in exemplifying what Hayes sees as the authentically "skeptical" spirit of Buddhism; cf., Hayes 1988: 52-62. For a recent statement of a rather different characterization of Madhyamaka as skeptical, see Ganeri 2001: 42-68. While it will become clear that I take issue with Ganeri's characterization of Madhyamaka as a species of skepticism, his explication of Madhyamaka can nevertheless be commended as unusually lucid and illuminating.

demand for this kind of justification already presupposes the truth of those claims. Reconstructing Candrakīrti's arguments contra the Epistemologist as transcendental arguments will thus help us bring this critique into relation with Candrakīrti's larger project, while at the same time rendering the larger project more coherent and intelligible.

Let us, then, see how it goes between Candrakīrti and his Epistemologist interlocutor. As we proceed, it will be useful to remain attentive to the dialectical distinctiveness of transcendental logic, as I have characterized it – that is, useful to notice that Candrakīrti will repeatedly argue, in effect, that his opponent cannot *deny* Candrakīrti's claims without *presupposing their truth*. In the present chapter, we will consider this logic specifically as it is applied to the Epistemologist's understanding of *svalakṣaṇas*. This consideration will lead us to develop (in the form of an excursus on the Mādhyamika category of *upādāya prajñapti*) an understanding of the properly metaphysical claim I am attributing to Candrakīrti. Then, in the following chapter, we will return (with attention to Candrakīrti's critique of the Epistemologist's doctrine of perception) to the transcendental argument made in defense of this claim.

4.ii. The Epistemologist's objection and Candrakīrti's initial response: *niścaya, aniścaya*, and the question of a Mādhyamika "thesis"

Most of Candrakīrti's well-known engagement with Bhāvaviveka comes in the course of his explicating the first verse of Nāgārjuna's *Mūlamadhyamakakārikā*, according to which, "There do not exist, anywhere at all, any existents whatsoever, arisen either from themselves or from something else, either from both or altogether without cause."[16] Having devoted tens of pages (following La Vallée Poussin's edition) to the dispute between Buddhapālita and Bhāvaviveka about how best to understand this

[16] *MMK* 1.1, *na svato nāpi parato na dvābhyāṃ nāpy ahetutaḥ / utpannāḥ jātu vidyante bhāvāḥ kvacana kecana* (La Vallée Poussin 1970b: 12.13-14).

statement,[17] Candrakīrti then anticipates another objection to Nāgārjuna's verse – this one clearly coming from an epistemologist (*pramāṇavādin*), who wants to know what *pramāṇas* (what valid cognitive instruments, what *reliable warrants*) provide the epistemological foundations for Candrakīrti's position: "Is this certainty (*niścaya*) that existents are not produced based on a reliable warrant (*pramāṇa*), or is it not based on a reliable warrant?"[18]

The passage thus introduced effectively elaborates one of the same objections that Nāgārjuna had anticipated and attempted to meet in the *Vigrahavyāvartanī*.[19] In that work, which scouts several objections that might be raised with regard to Nāgārjuna's characteristic claims regarding emptiness (most of which boil down to the claim that they involve self-referential incoherence), Nāgārjuna's fifth *kārikā* similarly considers a specifically epistemological objection: "If you [claim that you] refute [the essence of existents] having first apprehended [this fact] through perception, [we respond:] There is no perception by which existents are apprehended."[20] As Nāgārjuna's auto-commentary makes clear, the epistemological interlocutor considers the second line ("There is no perception by which existents are apprehended") to follow from the fact that *Nāgārjuna's own thesis has deprived us of any reliable warrants*, making it absurd for him to claim to

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[17] For this whole debate, see especially Yotsuya 1999.

[18] Quotes from Candrakīrti's *Prasannapadā* can be located in Appendix II, with each significant section of quotes in this chapter ending with a citation of the pagination of La Vallée Poussin's edition (n.6, above), as well as that of the appended translation (cf., e.g., n.26, below).

[19] While Lindtner (1982: 70, ff.), I think, speaks for the majority in holding that the *Vigrahavyāvartanī* is authentically attributable to Nāgārjuna, that view has not gone unchallenged; cf., e.g., Tola and Dragonetti 1998. For my purposes, though, it is enough that *Candrakīrti* thinks it is authentic, and frequently quotes from it in the *Prasannapadā*. Candrakīrti thus takes the arguments of the *Vigrahavyāvartanī* as normative for Mādhyamikas, and it is Candrakīrti whom I will follow in speaking of the text as Nāgārjuna's. For a useful exegesis of the *Vigrahavyāvartanī*, see Siderits 1980.

[20] *Vigrahavyāvartanī* 5: *pratyakṣeṇa hi tāvad yady upalabhya vinivartayasi bhāvān / tan nāsti pratyakṣaṃ bhāvā yena-upalabhyante*. The Sanskrit text (along with the Tibetan translation) of the *kārikās* is in Lindtner 1982: 76-86. The Sanskrit text of the *kārikās*, together with Nāgārjuna's *vṛtti* thereon, was edited by E. H. Johnston and Arnold Kunst, whose edition is reprinted in Bhattacharya 1990, along with a very good translation by Bhattacharya.

know *anything*.[21] That is, the epistemologist charges that *if* Nāgārjuna's thesis (*pratijñā*) is correct, then he cannot possibly claim to know that fact by virtue of any reliable warrant (*pramāṇa*); for according to that very thesis, no *pramāṇas* exist, insofar as they surely must be counted among "all existents."[22] What completes this objector's satisfaction that Nāgārjuna's position has thus been reduced to absurdity is the epistemological claim implicit in this objection: we are not justified in crediting any claim for which we cannot adduce *a posteriori* justification in the form of some reliable epistemic warrant (such as, paradigmatically, perception). Like Nāgārjuna, Candrakīrti elaborates his interlocutor's objection in such a way as to make clear that his interlocutor thinks the only *justified* belief is one based on such an *a posteriori* means of justification: "If [your certainty] is not based on a reliable warrant, this doesn't make sense, since understanding of a warrantable object (*prameya*) depends upon reliable warrants." Otherwise, the interlocutor urges, belief is arbitrary, such that he could say: "It will be my [certainty] precisely that all existents exist, and that based upon the same thing as your certainty that existents are unproduced!"

In the *Vigrahavyāvartanī*, Nāgārjuna's principal response to the epistemological objection involves the notion of a "thesis" (*pratijñā*). Specifically, Nāgārjuna famously claims that he is not obliged to adduce any reliable warrants for his position insofar as he *has* no "thesis": "If I had any thesis, then the fault would be mine; but I do *not* have a

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[21] *pratyakṣam api hi pramāṇaṃ sarvabhāvāntargatatvāc chūnyam; yo bhāvān upalabhate, so 'pi śūnyaḥ; tasmāt pratyakṣeṇa pramāṇena na-upalaṃbhabhāvo 'nupalabhdasya ca pratiṣedhānupapattiḥ* ("for the reliable warrant which is perception, too, is empty, owing to [its] being included in 'all existents'; you who apprehend [this] are also empty; therefore, there is no existence of apprehension by way of the reliable warrant that is perception, and negation of something unapprehended doesn't stand to reason"). The version of Nāgārjuna's "thesis," as put forward by the interlocutor in the *Vigrahavyāvaratni*, is that "all existents everywhere are without essence" (*Vigrahavyāvartani* 1a-b: *sarveṣāṃ bhāvānāṃ sarvatra na vidyate svabhāvaś cet*). Clearly, this amounts to the same thing claimed at *MMK* 1.1.

[22] Here, perhaps, we see one of the notions that will guide the move that I will characterize in terms of Candrakīrti's collapsing of epistemology and ontology. That is, the presupposition that such subjective phenomena as our epistemic instruments (*pramāṇas*) in fact count as a species of *existent* is among the ideas that will allow Candrakīrti (and Nāgārjuna) to equate the conditions of the possibility of *existents* with the conditions of the possibility of *analyses thereof*.

thesis, so I have no fault at all."[23] This passage represents one of the most well-known expressions of what is taken to be a characteristically Mādhyamika sort of skepticism, in the form of a disavowal of any specific truth claims. However, the question of what, precisely, it means thus to have no "thesis" particularly came to exercise generations of Tibetan interpreters of Madhyamaka, with many dGe-lugs-pa interpreters (who had a particular stake in defending the canons of dialectics and debate) inclined to qualify Nāgārjuna's claim.[24] Of course, dGe-lugs-pa interpreters were thus inclined owing to their interest in joining Madhyamaka to the epistemological tradition of Dignāga and Dharmakīrti. In fact, though, there is some indication in Nāgārjuna's text that the kind of *pratijñā* he disavows is best understood specifically as the *kind* of "thesis" that is thought to require warranting by *pramāṇas*: "If I apprehended anything by way of means such as perception, I would affirm or deny; [but] since that [which I might thus apprehend] doesn't exist, there is no reproach of me."[25] The object that Nāgārjuna "might" thus "apprehend" (*artham upalabheyam*) is a *svabhāva*, an "essence," belonging to existents; but insofar as his point is that the very idea of such an "essence" is

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[23] *Vigrahavyāvartani* 29: *yadi kācana pratijñā syān me tata eṣa me bhaved doṣaḥ / nāsti ca mama pratijñā tasmān naivāsti me doṣaḥ*. Putting the point more strongly, the auto-commentary asks how there *could* be a thesis/proposition: *tasmāt sarvabhāveṣu śūnyeṣv atyantopaśānteṣu prakṛtiviviktesu kutaḥ pratijñā?* ("so, when all existents are empty, completely pacified, naturally pure, how could there be a thesis?").

[24] Cf., e.g., Ruegg 1983. Cf., also, Matsumoto 1990. Matsumoto, one of the chief exponents of Japan's controversial "Critical Buddhism" movement, finds Tsong-kha-pa's defense of a "thesis" congenial (though he ultimately has a problem with *what* he takes that thesis to be).

[25] *Vigrahavyāvartani* 30: *yadi kiṃcid upalabheyaṃ pravartayeyaṃ nivartayeyaṃ vā / pratyakṣādibhir arthais tadabhāvān me 'nupālambhaḥ*. The auto-commentary makes clear that it is alleged *pramāṇas* which are here at stake: *yady ahaṃ kaṃcid artham upalabheyaṃ pratyakṣānumānopamānāgamaiś caturbhiḥ pramāṇaiś* .... ("If there were anything I could apprehend, [it would have to be] by way of [one of] the four *pramāṇas*, i.e., perception, inference, analogy, or tradition.") (Nāgārjuna's list of *pramāṇas* here clearly indicates a Naiyāyika interlocutor.) The next two *kārikās* then develop the critique of *pramāṇas* by way of an argument from infinite regress – i.e., the argument (noted in chapter 3 of this dissertation) similar to that of the Mīmāṃsakas: *yadi ca pramāṇatas te teṣāṃ teṣāṃ prasiddhir arthānām / teṣāṃ punaḥ prasiddhiṃ brūhi kathaṃ te pramāṇānām.* (*Vigrahavyāvartani* 31; cf., Chapter 3, n.44) Thus, if you argue that establishment of warrantable objects (*prameyāṇāṃ prasiddhim*) is by way of *pramāṇas*, we ask, *teṣām idānīṃ pratyakṣānumānopamānāgamānāṃ caturṇāṃ pramāṇānāṃ kutaḥ prasiddhiḥ? yadi tāvan niṣpramāṇānāṃ pramāṇānāṃ syāt prasiddhiḥ, pramāṇato 'rthānāṃ prasiddhir iti hīyate pratijñā.*

fundamentally incoherent, there could not possibly be anything answering to its description which might be "perceived" or "apprehended." This suggests the possibility that the *kind* of "thesis" (*pratijñā*) that Nāgārjuna disavows might be specifically (and only) the kind of thesis which is thought to require *a posteriori* justification by appeal to reliable warrants, insofar as Nāgārjuna thinks the very idea of independent warrants necessarily presupposes some such essence. When, in Chapter 5, we reach the conclusion of Candrakīrti's engagement with the Epistemologist, we will see that Candrakīrti finally makes explicit that his critique is ultimately motivated by the view that his interlocutor's account of *pramāṇas* similarly presupposes that the establishment of *pramāṇas* is "self-existent" or "essential" (*svābhāvikī*). (Cf., Chapter 5, n.35.)

Candrakīrti's interlocutor anticipates what might be thought (following Nāgārjuna's claim to have no "thesis") to be a characteristically Mādhyamika evasion: "Or [perhaps you will say] you have no certainty [to the effect that] 'all existents are unproduced.' In that case, since there's no persuading another of something of which one isn't oneself certain, it's pointless to undertake the treatise, and all existents stand unrefuted."[26] However, despite having thus imagined an interlocutor who anticipates a rejoinder such as Nāgārjuna's, Candrakīrti's initial response nevertheless brings into play a notion that is conceptually cognate with the issue Nāgārjuna addressed in terms of the question of a "thesis" (*pratijñā*):

> If we had anything at all like certainty (*yadi kaścinniścayo nāma-asmākaṃ syāt*), then there would be [a question of its being] based on a reliable warrant, or not based on a reliable warrant. But we don't! How so? If there were the possibility of doubt here, there could be a certainty opposed to it and dependent upon it. But when we have no doubt in the first place, then how could there be a certainty opposed to it?

Thus, Candrakīrti's initial response to his interlocutor trades on a point conceptually similar to Nāgārjuna's point about a "thesis" (*pratijñā*), with Candrakīrti here framing the

[26] The foregoing quotes are from the interlocutor's objection as elaborated at *Prasannapadā* 55.11-56.3; cf., Appendix II, n.2.

issue in terms of *niścaya* and its opposite (*aniścaya*, "non-*niścaya*" or "absence of *niścaya*").[27]

In trying to understand this exchange, it is tempting here to exploit the idea of *niścaya* as "certainty," which is one of the standard translation equivalents.[28] Its opposite (*aniścaya*), then, would be "doubt." In light of my intention to characterize Candrakīrti's interlocutor as exemplifying a species of skepticism, this would perhaps represent a tendentious emphasis; for it is thought to be paradigmatically characteristic of epistemic skepticism that the skeptic desires *certainty* (in the sense of incorrigible, indubitable knowledge), and disallows any claim to knowledge which does not meet that desideratum.[29] Skepticism in this sense can be said to motivate various sorts of foundationalism, with the search thus being for the kind of epistemic "foundations" that might guarantee the "certainty" of our claims.[30] It is perhaps misleading, though, to think of Dignāga as thus having been after "certainty" in anything like the technical sense of incorrigible knowledge, and to that extent it is perhaps misleading to think of

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[27] In the *Madhyamakāvatāra*, though, Candrakīrti makes a similar point in something more like Nāgārjuna's idiom; cf., *MA* 6.173c-d (La Vallée Poussin 1970a: 294): ... *bdag la phyogs 'di ni / yod pa min bas thal bar 'gyur ba 'di ni srid ma yin* ("since we have no position [*phyogs / pakṣa*], the consequence doesn't exist for us"). Note, too, that Candrakīrti explicitly relates his disagreement with the "*svātantrika*" Bhāvaviveka to this same line of reasoning from the *Vigrahavyāvartanī*. Thus, at *Prasannapadā* 16.7-10, Candrakīrti gives *kārikās* 29-30 of the *Vigrahavyāvartanī*, and then (16.11-12) uses them thus: *yadā caivaṃ svatantrānumānānabhidhāyitvaṃ mādhyamikasya, tadā kuto "nādhyātmikāny āyatanāni svata utpannāni" iti svatantrā pratijñā yasyāṃ sāṃkhyāḥ pratyavasthāsyante*... ("And when, in just the same way, the Mādhyamika is not propounding an independent syllogism, then how could there be [the kind of] independent thesis – 'the internal sense spheres are not arisen from themselves' – with respect to which the Sāṃkhyas will object"). For another passage regarding "*svatantra-anumānas*" that is conceptually cognate with passages from the *Vigrahavyāvartanī*, cf., 34.4-5: *svatantram anumānaṃ bruvatām ayaṃ doṣo jāyate; na vayaṃ svatantram anumānaṃ prayuñjmahe parapratiṣedhaphalatvād asmadanumānānām* ("this fault arises for those who propound an independent syllogism; [but] we do not deploy an independent syllogism, since the result of our inferences is [simply] to refute others").

[28] Cf., Apte (1992: 925): "A fixed opinion, settled or firm conviction, firm belief.... A determination, resolution, resolve... Certainty, positiveness, positive conclusion."

[29] Here, however, we would do well to recall Kapstein's suggestion that we be cautious about supposing that Indian appeals to *niścaya* concern *apodictic* certainty; cf., Chapter 2, n.95.

[30] Cf.., Chapter 2, n.45.

Candrakīrti's argument as being to the effect that *if there is no room for doubt, then there is no need for the kind of certainty that is in need of a warrant.*[31]

Nevertheless, even without emphasizing the possibly misleading character of my translation, we can find in this initial exchange between Candrakīrti and his imagined interlocutor evidence of its being the *latter* (and not Candrakīrti) who exemplifies a species of skepticism. Here, I follow Robert Stern, whose work on transcendental arguments derives much of its force from his careful attention to the different kinds of skepticism to which such arguments might be thought to be addressed. Stern needs to do this since transcendental arguments are typically adduced precisely as circumventing the demands of skeptical challenges. Stern persuasively argues, however, that it is misleading to represent transcendental arguments as meant to satisfy the demands of *epistemic* skepticism, and considers instead the possibility of their having some purchase vis-à-vis various kinds of *justificatory* skepticism. Thus, the epistemic skeptic questions whether we really have *any* "knowledge" at all, exploiting the fact that we can press against any claim to knowledge the fact that we could be wrong, and urging that we must therefore concede that, insofar as we have no *certainty*, we have no knowledge. This type of skepticism, though, is fairly easily dispatched by making the concession, and then proceeding with respect to something other than this narrowly defined sense of "knowledge." That is, "in the face of the sceptical attack on knowledge, we can lay claim to reasonable or justified belief, feeling that even if our views about the world are fallible, we are at least *entitled* to have them; to give them up or doubt them would be wrong, even if there is some possibility that we could be mistaken. The *justificatory* sceptic therefore moves to attack this position."[32] In other words, the epistemic skeptic presses

[31] Cf., though, Richard Hayes's suggestion that in fact, Dignāga *is* after certainty – or at least, has raised the bar that high simply in order to show that nothing can clear it (Chapter 2, n.99).

[32] Stern 2000: 17-18.

the sort of global doubt which can readily be shown to be self-referentially incoherent;[33] justificatory skepticism, in contrast, asks whether we are entitled to *particular* beliefs.

Stern then goes on to consider various forms of justificatory skepticism – chiefly, *reliabilist* and *normativist* justificatory skepticism. The former proceeds by asking whether our belief-forming practices (in the present context, our *pramāṇas*) can be shown to be reliably truth-conducive, and such a skeptic is likely to press the kind of circularity objection familiar from our consideration of Mīmāṃsā in the preceding chapter.[34] The *normativist* justificatory skeptic, in contrast, does not doubt that we have reliable belief-forming practices at our disposal, only that some particular belief or beliefs can be warranted by any of them. This characterization, it seems to me, aptly captures the nature of the challenge which Candrakīrti has here attributed to his interlocutor; for the Buddhist Epistemologist does not doubt that *are* any reliable warrants (*pramāṇas*), only that Candrakīrti's claim can be justified by any one of these.[35] Thus, Candrakīrti's interlocutor cannot imagine how a claim can be justified except by the *a posteriori* means that render something "ascertained" (*niścita*): "If, as you say, you never have any

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[33] I.e., by way of a transcendental argument: any attempt to explain our epistemic practices, insofar as such attempts must make use of the kinds of meaningful discourse which already presuppose such practices, can only get off the ground if the very things it purports to explain do not, in fact, require explanation. In something like this vein, Michael Williams (1996), for example, has argued that the type of foundationalist project which is motivated by this kind of skepticism should not be allowed to get off the ground, insofar as the "doubts" which the proponent of such a project thinks must be addressed are not, in fact, "naturally" occurring doubts. Cf., nn. 170, 171 in Chapter Three of this dissertation. Candrakīrti would, to be sure, agree with this line of thinking, which I am here bracketing only insofar as it may not address the concern that Candrakīrti attributes to his interlocutor. In the next chapter, though, I will suggest that particularly Candrakīrti's engagement with the Epistemologist's doctrine of *pratyakṣa* involves an argument such as this.

[34] Cf., also, n.25, above, for a similar objection from the *Vigrahavyāvartanī*. This is not to suggest that the Mīmāṃsakas thus exemplify Stern's "reliabilist justificatory skepticism"; rather, they press this kind of argument only so far as to show that we have no choice but to rely on generally accredited doxastic practices. Cf., again, n. 170 in Chapter Three of this dissertation.

[35] Recall, though, Hayes's characterization of Dignāga as exemplifying a more global sort of skepticism, with his contention (1988: 158-68) that Dignāga might deliberately "be stating a canon of certainty that no judgement ever measures up to.... For it should be clear that very few of our judgements in ordinary life pass the standards set by the three characteristics of legitimate evidence. Taken in its strictest interpretation, none of the judgements of any but a fully omniscient being passes." Cf., Chapter 2, n.99.

certainty at all, then how is this expression of yours – which has the form of something ascertained (*niścitarūpaṃ vākyam*), to wit, 'neither intrinsically, nor extrinsically, nor through both, nor causelessly, do existents exist' – apprehended?"

On my reading of the Epistemologist's challenge as a skeptical one, then, the interlocutor understands Candrakīrti's claim as "having the form of something ascertained" specifically *by some accredited pramāṇa* – and what Candrakīrti refuses is that *this kind of justification* needs to (or even *can*) be sought. If it is perhaps misleading, then, to represent the Buddhist Epistemologist as seeking "certainty" (*niścaya*), in the technical sense of indubitability, and to characterize Candrakīrti as refusing that the kind of "doubt" (*aniścaya*) which must be displaced by warranted certainty is even possible (though surely he would say as much), it is nevertheless the case that Candrakīrti here evinces the refusal of a particular kind of skepticism; for while his interlocutor thinks that the only kind of *niścaya* that is worth anything is the kind warranted by specifiable *pramāṇas*, Candrakīrti here answers that he has no need to achieve this in the first place – and indeed, he will argue that it is incoherent to try. This is the point of Candrakīrti's suggestion that *there is no possibility of doubt* with respect to his claim.

If Candrakīrti's claims are not "ascertained" (*niścita*) by the Epistemologist's *a posteriori* means of justification, though, then how does Candrakīrti represent them? In regard to this question, we find some of the characteristically Mādhyamika discourse that might lead one to suppose that it is precisely the *Mādhyamika* who is a skeptic: "This expression is ascertained by reasoning which is common-sensical only on the part of the world, not on the part of the venerable (*ārya*). Does this mean the venerable have no reasoning? Who can say whether or not they do? For ultimate truth is a matter of venerable silence." Given this, says Candrakīrti, the venerable "do not expound reasoning according to business as usual. Rather, granting, for the sake of awakening

others, only that reasoning which is well-established in the world, in that way they awaken the world."[36]

Candrakīrti thus seems to suggest that the "ultimate truth" (*paramārthasatya*) that he is finally after is not available to reasoning (*upapatti*) at all, and that the conventional world of argumentation is therefore only provisionally accepted by the "venerable" ones (*ārya*) who have realized the status of full Buddhist insight. Insofar, then, as this is a project in which the conventional world seems ultimately to be superseded by an "ultimate truth" which seems radically incompatible with it, one might well understand Candrakīrti here to be suggesting that there is an important sense in which discourse as we know it is altogether false – and what could be more "skeptical" than thus to refuse the validity of *everything* we thought we had known?[37] This gets at the heart of one of the most vexing aspects of Candrakīrti's project, and a full consideration of the implications of the remainder of this passage will have to await our fuller consideration, at the end of this chapter, of Candrakīrti's notions about how "conventional" (*saṃvṛti*) and "ultimate" (*paramārtha*) are to be related. To anticipate, though, I will be arguing that there is in fact an important sense in which Candrakīrti posits a fundamental *identity* between these "two truths" – an identity that will particularly trade on the posited equivalence of the (causal, ontological) notion of "dependent origination" (*pratītyasamutpāda*), and the (epistemic) notion of "conventions" and the "conventional"

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[36] The foregoing passages from Candrakīrti occur at *Prasannapadā* 56.4-57.11; cf., Appendix II, nn.3, 4, 7.

[37] John Dunne (1996) adduces similar passages from the *Madhyamakāvatāra* to suggest that, while Buddhist philosophers such as Dharmakīrti allow for some degree of human participation in the experience of Buddhahood, Candrakīrti instead posits an understanding of Buddhahood as radically "other": "By placing true reality on the side of the ultimate, Madhyamaka philosophers claim that the conventional world as it appears is necessarily unreal in some way." (1996: 543) Characterizing the kind of Buddha which Candrakīrti thus imagines, Dunne writes: "Not only does such a buddha not see the ordinary things of the world, he does not even know ultimate reality because nothing at all occurs in a buddha's mind. Indeed, it would seem that Candrakīrti's buddhas do not know anything at all." (*Ibid.*: 548) Paul Griffiths (1994) has persuasively argued that something like this is in fact the case with respect to Buddhist discourse more generally, and indeed, Griffiths focuses particularly on the kinds of Yogācāra sources that are rather closer to Dharmakīrti's world than to Candrakīrti's. Be that as it may, I will be arguing, among other things, that Candrakīrti can be read in precisely the *opposite* way.

(*prajñapti, saṃvṛti*, etc.); and that this equivalence is such that the characterization of the world (and of discourse) as "conventional" *amounts to a metaphysical claim.*[38]

Thus, while this issue certainly represents a hermeneutically complex point with regard to which Candrakīrti will admit of more than one reading, I will suggest that Candrakīrti's views regarding the relation between "conventional" and "ultimate" are in fact such that this is precisely where we can see a properly metaphysical claim being made – in which case, the issue between the Epistemologist and Candrakīrti does not involve the former's arguing for beliefs and the latter's not; rather, the difference concerns the question of *what kind of justification* these beliefs are thought to require. It is precisely to the extent that Candrakīrti understands the ultimate fact about existents (viz., their "emptiness") as *transcendental* to them – to the extent, that is, that he considers emptiness to be not an experienceable *property* that existents happen to instantiate, but a *condition of their possibility* – that Candrakīrti thinks it incoherent to demand epistemic warrants for this claim; for on Candrakīrti's view, this demand itself compromises precisely the claim that he thinks it most important to defend.

Before we press on to his substantive engagement with the Buddhist Epistemologist, though, it will be useful for us to consider briefly an example that Candrakīrti then adduces by way of showing how the "venerable" (*ārya*) deploy the reasoning which they provisionally adopt "for the sake of awakening others" (*parāvabodhārtham*). This is useful since Candrakīrti's treatment of this example helpfully discloses the fundamentally *a priori* mode of his reasoning, and thus can advance our understanding of his as transcendental arguments (which I have characterized as rejecting *a posteriori* appeals in favor of *a priori* justification). Thus:

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[38] I concur, then, with Tsong-kha-pa, for whom Nāgārjuna's equation of emptiness and dependent origination represents precisely "the uncommon thesis (*lugs*) of the venerable master" (quoted by Matsumoto 1990: 33) – though as will become clear, I think that Tsong-kha-pa misreads Candrakīrti's point regarding what this fact should entail about how we argue for that position.

> Now the venerable awaken them to [the true nature of things] through reasoning which is familiar to them [i.e., to ordinary beings]. For example, it's [generally] granted that there is no production of an existent jar from the clay and so forth; thus, because what *exists* already exists prior to production, it would be determined that there is no production.[39] Or, for example, it's accepted that a sprout is not produced from the coals of a fire, which are other than it; in this way, it could be ascertained that [production] is not from the seeds and so forth, either, which are intended.

Here, then, Candrakīrti gives us a sketch of "*prāsaṅgika*" reasoning in action – a sketch, that is, of the deployment, by those who are enlightened, of "reasoning which is familiar" (*prasiddhayaiva-upapattyā*) to the world. The first argument shows, with respect to the first verse of Nāgārjuna's *Mūlamadhyamakakārikā* ("There do not exist, anywhere at all, any existents whatsoever, arisen either from themselves or from something else, either from both or altogether without cause"), why the first horn of this tetralemma cannot be the case – viz., because the causation of something *from itself* would require that the thing in question already exist, in which case, its coming-into-being no longer requires explanation.[40] It requires little persuading to accept that this could count as "reasoning which is familiar" to the ordinary person.

It is rather less clear, though, that "familiar" reasoning is in play in the case of the second example, which represents Candrakīrti's quick sketch of why the second horn of Nāgārjuna's tetralemma (which would hold that existents are caused by *other* existents) cannot obtain. The argument itself (on which, more in a moment) is not difficult to grasp, only its claim to represent "familiar" reasoning. This is, in fact, the upshot of an elliptically stated objection from the interlocutor: "But this is our experience." Here we see an explicit demand for *a posteriori* justification – a demand, that is, that our belief

[39] This basically reproduces Buddhapālita's argument regarding the "*na svato*" part of the tetralemma presented at *MMK* 1.1, which Candrakīrti cites at p.14.1-3. (The Tibetan translation of Buddhapālita's entire commentary on *MMK* 1.1 can be found in Walleser 1970: 11.8, ff.)

[40] This argument is traditionally understood to be directed at the Sāṃkhya proponent of the doctrine of *satkāryavāda* – i.e., the view that effects "pre-exist" in their causes (i.e., insofar as there is, for the Sāṃkhya, properly speaking no causation whatsoever, but only the "transformation" [*pariṇāma*] of *prakṛti*). Cf., Larson 1979: 164-66. Much of the exchange between Candrakīrti and Bhāvaviveka is in this way framed in terms of possible arguments specifically against the Sāṃkhya position.

with respect to this matter be justified by appeal to what we experience. A similar demand is less elliptically ventured in the *Madhyamakāvatāra*, where Candrakīrti explicitly frames an interlocutor's precisely similar objection in terms of an appeal to ordinary language and convention: "By someone who accepts as authoritative the every-day world, the basis of which is direct experience, what is to be accomplished here by these demands for reasoned argument? *Everyone* thinks that one thing is produced from another. Therefore, there is 'birth from another,' so what need is there for reasoning with respect to this?"[41] As we will appreciate by the time we have seen the full force of Candrakīrti's commitment to ordinary language, it is quite significant that he here imagines an interlocutor who might trump him in this regard. Indeed, as we will soon see, it is invariably *Candrakīrti* who will charge his interlocutor with compromising the integrity of the "conventional," and with needlessly introducing the demands that are peculiar to the technical context of philosophical "reasoning."

This initially puzzling example of "familiar reasoning" can, however, help us appreciate the fundamentally *a priori* character of Candrakīrti's approach, particularly if we unpack his interlocutor's appeal to "experience" (*anubhava*) as an appeal to *a posteriori* means of justification. In order thus to unpack the interlocutor's appeal, we can follow the lead of the *Madhyamakāvatāra* in finding here a discussion of the status of what is, for the Buddhist Epistemologist, the privileged *pramāṇa* of perception (*pratyakṣa*) (with the issues raised by following this avenue being issues that Candrakīrti will go on to elaborate in the section of the *Prasannapadā* that will be treated in the following chapter). Thus, Candrakīrti's *Madhyamakāvatārabhāṣya* here specifically

[41] *Madhyamakāvatāra* 6.22 (La Vallée Poussin 1970a: 101): *gang gis rang lta la gnas 'jig rten tshad mar 'dod pas na / 'dir ni rigs pa smras pa nyid kyis lta ko ci zhig bya / gzhan las gzhan 'byung ba yang 'jig rten pa yis rtogs 'gyur te / des na gzhan las skyes yod 'dir ni rigs pas ci zhig dgos*. (All references to the Tibetan text of the *Madhyamakāvatāra* and its *bhāṣya* are to this edition.) "The basis of which is direct experience" renders the Tibetan *rang lta la gnas*; on this expression, cf., La Vallée Poussin (1910: 298-9n.), who reconstructs this as *svadarśanasthita*, and renders "l'aperception directe." As we will see, this is warranted by the *bhāṣya* passage that follows, which introduces the gloss *mngon sum* (*pratyakṣa*). Cf., Huntington 1989: 160, who renders "which is grounded in immediate perception."

introduces *pratyakṣa* as what chiefly characterizes our "experience" (*anubhava*). It is, the interlocutor thus argues, evident simply on the basis of *perception* that existents are produced from other existents; and "appeal to reasoned argument is appropriate only with respect to things that are not perceptible, and not with respect to what is perceptible. Therefore, even without any argument, it must still be true that existents are produced from other [existents.]"[42] In other words, insofar as perception trumps other means of knowing, our simply *seeing* things being produced from other existents is sufficient to establish this fact.

Clearly, this passage from the *Madhyamakāvatāra* elaborates the same objection that is put more elliptically ("this is our experience," *anubhava eṣo 'smākam*) in the *Prasannapadā*. In his response to our passage from the *Prasannapadā*, Candrakīrti flatly dismisses the value of this appeal for *a posteriori* justification: "This [appeal to experience] doesn't make sense, either, since this experience is false, [simply] *because* it's experience – like the experience of two moons on the part of someone with cataracts. Therefore, by virtue of the fact that experience similarly requires proof, this objection doesn't make sense."[43] In the *Madhyamakāvatāra*, Candrakīrti's response to the less elliptically stated form of the objection again amounts to an elaboration of the same point: "All entities bear a dual nature, according to whether they are apprehended through a correct or an incorrect perception. Whatever is an object of correct perception is reality, while what is revealed through incorrect perception is said to be *saṃvṛtisatya*."[44] He elaborates in his auto-commentary:

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[42] *Madhyamakāvatārabhāṣya*, p.101: *rigs pa nye bar 'god pa yang dngos po mngon sum ma yin pa kho na la 'os kyi mngon sum la ni ma yin te / de'i phyir 'thad pa med par yang dngos po rnams gzhan las skye ba yod pa kho na'o* .... Cf., La Vallée Poussin 1910: 299, Huntington 1989: 231.

[43] The foregoing passages from Candrakīrti occur at 58.3-13; cf., Appendix II, nn.7, 9.

[44] *Madhyamakāvatāra* 6.23 (La Vallée Poussin 1970a: 102): *dngos kun yang dag rdzun pa mthong ba yis / dngos rnyed ngo bo gnyis ni 'dzin par 'gyur / yang dag mthong yul gang de de nyid de / mthong ba brdzun pa kun rdzob bden par gsungs //.*

> The ultimate truth is constituted (*bdag ni ngo bo rnyed pa yin*) by its being the particular object of the wisdom of those who see rightly. But it does not exist in itself. This is one of the natures [of things]. As for the other, it is constituted by the force of the false vision of those ordinary persons for whom the eyesight of the intellect is afflicted by the cataracts of ignorance. This does not exist in itself, either, but is simply the object of the perception of naive people. Therefore, all things are apprehended as bearing a dual intrinsic nature.[45]

Thus, while we saw in Chapter 2 that Dignāga's account of perception (*pratyakṣa*) takes it, insofar as it is "free of conceptual construction," to provide privileged access to an unmediated "given" which is in some sense ultimately real, Candrakīrti denies that *any* of our conventional practices thus afford us access to what is ultimately real. He puts this even more compellingly near the end of the *Madhyamakāvatāra*'s sixth chapter: "[Only] the omniscient wisdom [of a buddha] is accepted as endowed with the characteristics of *pratyakṣa*; anything else, because of its being ephemeral, is not accepted as *pratyakṣa*."[46] While the Epistemologist's demand for *a posteriori* justification thus involves appeal to a privileged epistemic faculty, Candrakīrti rejoins that there *are* no such privileged faculties – only a Buddha's insight affords access to what is ultimately the case, with the rest of us blighted by the "cataracts" of ignorance that prevent us from appreciating our epistemic and soteriological limitations. *A posteriori* justification, then, is of no use here, insofar as it is precisely our *experience* of the world that Candrakīrti considers compromised.

Having thus dismissed the demand for *a posteriori* justification as an appeal to an unreliable instrument, Candrakīrti ventures an argument against *parabhāva* ("arising from another") that gains its purchase instead from an *a priori* analysis. That is,

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[45] *Madhyamakāvatārabhāṣya* (*Ibid.*: 102-3): *de la don dam pa ni yang dag par gzigs pa rnams kyi ye shes kyi khyad par gyi yul nyid kyis bdag ni ngo bo rnyed pa yin gyi / rang gi bdag nyid kyis grub pa ni ma yin te / 'di ni ngo bo gcig yin no / gzhan ni so so'i skye po ma rig pa'i rab rib kyi ming tog gis blo'i mig ma lus par khebs pa rnams kyi mthong ba rdzun pa'i stobs las bdag ni yod pa rnyed pa yin te / byis pa rnams kyis mthong ba'i yul du gyur pa ji lta ba de lta bu'i rang bzhin du rang gi ngo bos grub pa ni ma yin no / de'i phyir dngos po thams cad rang bzhin de gnyis 'dzin pa yin no /.* Apropos of the ultimate truth's "not existing in itself," cf., Chapter 5, n.68, for a consideration of David Burton's questionable interpretation of a related idea.

[46] *Madhyamakāvatāra* 6.214 (La Vallée Poussin 1970a: 337): *rnam kun mkhyen nyid ye shes ni / mngon sum mtshan nyid can du 'dod / gzhan ni nyi tshe ba nyid kyis / mngon sum zhes byar mi 'dod do.*

Candrakīrti's argument – viz., that since a sprout isn't produced from the coals of a fire, it can't be produced from a seed, either – short-circuits any appeal to what we experience to be the case by analyzing only the concepts presupposed in how we talk about experience, and reducing to absurdity any argument that presupposes such concepts. Read this way, Candrakīrti's argument is quite straightforward – and this perhaps in contrast to the characteristically dGe-lugs-pa reconstruction of Candrakīrti's point. Thus, the dGe-lugs-pas typically understand Candrakīrti's statement of the argument as requiring qualification: viz., to be "other" than something is to be *inherently* or *essentially* (*svabhāvena*) other than it. Thus, the claim that will readily be granted by the ordinary person (i.e., the part of this that represents "reasoning which is familiar") is that sprouts are not caused by the coals of a fire. However, on this reading the further claim is this: if it be granted that the *reason* for that fact is that the coals of a fire are "other" than a sprout, then it must also be accepted that seeds (which is what the proponent "intended," *vivakṣita*, to posit as the cause) also cannot cause sprouts; for seeds are just as much "other" than a sprout as coals are. This is particularly so if we think of Candrakīrti as taking "other" to mean *inherently* or *essentially* other; for to have an *essence* (*svabhāva*) which is other than something else is, by definition, to have no need (and indeed, no capacity) of standing in any relation to it.[47]

There is, to be sure, something to be said for this characteristically dGe-lugs-pa reconstruction of Candrakīrti's argument. We can, however, make sense of the argument simply as it is stated, without recourse to any qualifications. The more straightforward reading turns simply on the definition of "other"; for the general concept of "otherness"

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[47] For a statement of this characteristically dGe-lugs-pa reconstruction, cf., e.g., mKhas-grub rje (as translated by Cabezon 1992: 121): "Inherent (*rang bzhin gyis*) arising cannot be considered to be true on either of the two levels of truth [conventional or ultimate], but one must understand that there *does exist* arising that is dependent and that exists as long as one does not analyze or examine it. The glorious Candra has said that not distinguishing mere arising from inherent arising is lunacy in the extreme." In this way, dGe-lugs-pa exegetes typically introduce a distinction between "mere" arising, and that which takes place *rang bzhin gyis* (=Skt. *svabhāvena*).

leaves us with no principled way to know *which* other things are relevantly connected to the thing whose arising we seek to explain, and we are thus left to suppose that *anything* which is "other" than the latter (even, e.g., the coals of a fire) could give rise to it. The unwanted consequence (*prasaṅga*) which thus follows from this more straightforward reading is, indeed, precisely what Buddhapālita had urged with respect to this horn of the dilemma, and Candrakīrti quotes it elsewhere with approval.[48]

Whether we adopt the straightforward reading or the dGe-lugs-pa reconstruction, though, in either case Candrakīrti's initially counter-intuitive claim that the production of existents from other existents can be refuted by "reasoning which is familiar" in the world is best understood as rejecting *a posteriori* appeals to putatively justificatory experience, and instead as deploying *a priori* analysis of the concepts involved. Insofar as this move here involves a fairly straightforward point (viz., that the concept of *parabhāva* leaves no principled way to distinguish *which* "others" we should attend to), the argument turns out indeed to have a plausible claim to representing "reasoning that is familiar." It's just that the equally familiar appeal to *a posteriori* justification has been rejected in favor of a straightforward appeal to *a priori* justification.

And such is, I am suggesting, typical of the whole Mādhyamika enterprise. Thus, for example, Nāgārjuna's critique of "motion" (i.e., chapter 2 of the *MMK*, "an investigation of coming and going") does not involve any inquiry into our *experience* of the phenomena of motion; rather, it trades entirely on analysis of the *concepts* at play therein. That is why Candrakīrti can conclude (as he does), having explicated the first verse of Nāgārjuna's text, that the entire remainder of Nāgārjuna's treatise is undertaken "in order to show that dependent origination does not have any irreducible (*niravaśeṣa*)

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[48] Thus, Buddhapālita (Walleser 1970: 11) says: "Existents do not arise from something other. Why? Because it would follow that everything [can] arise from everything else" (*gzhan las kyang skye ba med do / ci'i phyir zhe na / thams cad las thams cad skye bar thal bar 'gyur ba'i phyir ro*). Cf., *Prasannapadā* 36.11-12, where Candrakīrti gives Buddhapālita's Sanskrit (*na parata utpadyante bhāvāḥ, sarvataḥ sarvasaṃbhavaprasaṅgāt*).

characteristics, not even such as goer, destination, or motion."[49] Such basic concepts, on Candrakīrti's view, particularly fail as attempts to explain our conventions. My argument in the present chapter, then, is that Candrakīrti thinks we must reject the Epistemologist's claim to have access to something more "real" than what our conventionally understood epistemic practices yield *only insofar as there* is nothing *more "real" than our conventions;* and the claim that this is the case is the properly *metaphysical* claim that is advanced by Candrakīrti's arguments. This metaphysical claim (i.e., that there is nothing more real than our conventions) cannot be warranted by the Epistemologist's brand of justification insofar as the Epistemologist's appeal to a peculiarly technical sense of perception *just is* a demand for something more real than our conventions. Candrakīrti's chief claim can therefore only be justified by a logically distinct type of argument, and that precisely in virtue of the *content* of that claim, which is such as to make the Epistemologist's demands an example of precisely the problem to be overcome. Candrakīrti's rejection of his interlocutor's elliptical appeal to experience, then, has afforded us a glimpse of the *a priori* logic which, I am arguing, runs through Candrakīrti's exchange with the Epistemologist, as throughout Candrakīrti's work.

It is precisely at this point that Candrakīrti attributes to his interlocutor the claim that he is not, in fact, trying to get "behind" our conventions to something more "real"; rather, he is represented as claiming, "It is [simply] worldly convention (*vyavahāra*) regarding warrants and warrantable objects which has been explained by us through [our system's] treatise." Since nearly all Buddhists will wish to emphasize that the ultimate realization of a Buddha vastly exceeds our limited ability to talk about it, it is as we should expect that Epistemologists such as Dignāga, being good Buddhists, will thus wish to claim that their peculiar doctrines amount simply to accounts of our *conventional*

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[49] 58.12-13; cf., Appendix II, n.9.

epistemic practices.[50] In that case, Candrakīrti urges, it should be explained why the Epistemologist's peculiarly technical project is called for at all, since surely we already understand our conventions. His interlocutor rejoins that the sense of our conventional usage "has been destroyed by bad logicians (*kutārkikaiḥ*), through their predication (*abhidhāna*) of false characteristics," and that he therefore wishes to restore its proper sense.

Candrakīrti's response to this claim is a transcendental argument in miniature:

> This doesn't make sense, either. For if, based on the composition of a false definition by bad logicians, *everyone* made a mistake regarding what's under definition (*kṛtaṃ lakṣyavaiparītyaṃ lokasya syāt*), [then] the point of this [i.e., of your proposed alternative to Nyāya epistemology] would be one whose effort was fruitful. But it's not so, and this effort is pointless.[51]

A brief word is required here on the likely referent of *kutārkika*, which I have rendered as "bad logician." What becomes clear in the ensuing course of our section of the *Prasannapadā* is that Candrakīrti's interlocutor is here designating the Naiyāyikas thus; for Candrakīrti will conclude this section by endorsing the list of *pramāṇas* standardly admitted in the Nyāya school.[52] Thus, Candrakīrti frames his disagreement with his interlocutor in terms of Nyāya epistemology, with the Epistemologist here contending that some refinement of the account is called for only insofar as Nyāya epistemology has compromised the issue.[53] To this, Candrakīrti rejoins by suggesting that in fact Nyāya

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[50] Cf., inter alia, *Pramāṇasamuccayavṛtti ad Pramāṇasamuccaya* 5.38b (given by Katsura 1991: 141, n.51): *mig gis gzung bar bya ba nyid spangs nas / sngon po dang ser po la sogs pa tha dad pa rnams la yang / 'jig rten la bstan pa'i gzugs kyi sgra khas blang bar bya'i ro la sogs pa rnams la ni ma yin no* ("Having given up on [their] being apprehensible by the eye, the differences between things like blue and yellow are to be accepted as words whose form is as taught in the world, and not as pertaining to things like taste").

[51] The foregoing exchange occurs at *Prasannapadā* 58.14-59.3; cf., Appendix II, n.10. As noted in the Appendix, it is with respect to this passage that the anonymous author of the **Lakṣaṇaṭīkā* (cf., n.8, above) specifically identifies Dignāga as Candrakīrti's interlocutor. (Thanks are due to Yoshiyasu Yonezawa for sharing with me the fragment given there.)

[52] See *Prasannapadā* 75.6-9, as well as p.69.11-12; cf., Appendix II, nn.51, 85.

[53] And indeed, much of the first chapter of Dignāga's *Pramāṇasamuccaya* is devoted to canvassing rival definitions of perception, and showing why they are wrong; cf., Chapter 2, n.60. Dignāga's engagement specifically with the Nyāya account occurs at Hattori 1968: 36-41 (Hattori's translation), 1968: 190-199 (Tibetan text).

epistemology *does* adequately thematize our conventional practices, such that an alternative to Nyāya epistemology could only be the preferred account if most people were *wrong* in their use of the ordinary language terms that describe our epistemic practices. The transcendental argument against this is to the effect that it *cannot* be the case that most people are wrong in their use of ordinary language, since a condition of the possibility of meaningful discourse (including that of the Epistemologist!) is that most people generally use language correctly.[54]

This is, on my reading, what Candrakīrti will argue. It is therefore significant that Candrakīrti has thus introduced his consideration of the "specifically Yogācāra-Sautrāntika assumptions" which, as Mark Siderits rightly notes, are about to be introduced here;[55] for from this point forward, Candrakīrti's governing concern will simply be that of rejecting his interlocutor's claim to be giving an account of our conventional usage. Candrakīrti's approach will thus very well exemplify what Jay Garfield has aptly characterized Nāgārjuna's project to be – that of "taking conventions as the foundation of ontology, hence rejecting the very enterprise of a philosophical search for the ontological foundations of convention."[56] (It remains, though, to see precisely what is meant, on this account, by "conventions.") Specifically, Candrakīrti will urge that the "foundation of ontology" must be sought in conventional usage with respect to the two categories (crucially correlated by Dignāga) that figure most

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[54] Such an argument, as I will note, not only has affinities with arguments made by several 20th-century ordinary language philosophers, but also with an argument commonly associated with Donald Davidson: "What makes interpretation possible ... is the fact that we can dismiss a priori the chance of massive error. A theory of interpretation cannot be correct that makes a man assent to very many false sentences: it must generally be the case that a sentence is true when a speaker holds it to be." (1984: 168-9) What particularly distinguishes Davidson's argument is his claim not only regarding *meaning*, but also regarding *truth*; that is, he holds not only that people must generally be "right" in what they understand their language to mean, but must further be "right" in terms of what it refers to. As we will see, Candrakīrti's complex understanding of "conventions" can similarly function to bring something external to discourse – i.e., *the world* – into the picture.

[55] Siderits 1981: 127.

[56] Garfield 1995: 122.

prominently in the Epistemologist's *a posteriori* approach to justification: viz., perception (*pratyakṣa*) and the unique object thereof (*svalakṣaṇas*). With respect to each of these categories, then, Candrakīrti will argue simply that the Epistemologist's technical elaboration of them can only be advanced at the expense of conventional usage – and that, insofar as the conventional usage is what makes meaningful discourse possible, the project thus involves self-contradiction. The self-referential incoherence here can be put more straightforwardly: *what is conventionally true is just our conventions*; thus, any project which purports to be "conventionally" valid while yet deploying words in something other than their conventional sense is contradicting itself. Thus, Candrakīrti's approach here will combine *a priori* analysis of our concepts with something like ordinary language philosophy; for Candrakīrti will seek to show only that the concepts deployed by the Epistemologist involve features that make the Epistemologist's peculiarly technical elaboration of them incoherent. For the remainder of the present chapter, we will be concerned particularly with how Candrakīrti makes this argument with respect to the category of *svalakṣaṇa*.

4.iii. Candrakīrti on *svalakṣaṇa*

Candrakīrti raises the issue of *svalakṣaṇas* in such a way as to make clear that his interlocutor here is a Buddhist Epistemologist, and Candrakīrti's opening salvo trades on the notion that the idea of a "characteristic" (*lakṣaṇa*) is by definition the idea of a *relationship* – specifically, a relationship between a "characteristic" (*lakṣaṇa*) and the "thing characterized" thereby (*lakṣya*):

> And if you say there are [only] two reliable warrants, corresponding respectively to the two [kinds of warrantable objects, i.e.,] unique particulars and

abstractions,[57] [then we are entitled to ask,] does the subject (*lakṣya*) which has these two characteristics exist? Or does it not exist? If it exists, then there is an additional warrantable object; how, then, are there [only] two reliable warrants? Or perhaps [you will say] the subject [which is characterized by these characteristics] does not exist. In that case, even the characteristic, being without a locus, doesn't exist, [and] how, [in this case,] are there [as many as] two reliable warrants?

In this way, Candrakīrti urges that the Epistemologist's *sva-* and *sāmānyalakṣaṇas*, precisely insofar as they are (etymologically) types of "characteristics," must be instantiated in some *subject of characterization* (*lakṣya*) – which, it is suggested, the Epistemologist cannot admit without compromising his commitment to the view that there are only two types of existents, since the subject in which these were instantiated would seem to represent an additional existent. On the other hand, it is incoherent to suppose that these are not the "characteristics" *of* anything, since the conventional understanding of the term definitionally involves the characteristic / characterized relationship. In this connection, then, Candrakīrti can tell us something interesting about what Dignāga might have understood *svalakṣaṇas* (which, we saw, Dignāga characterizes only as "indefinable") to be like; for Candrakīrti agrees with Shoryu Katsura, who (as we saw in Chapter 2) says, "I do not think that Dignāga admitted any bearer of the two *lakṣaṇas*."[58] That is, Candrakīrti presses his point – viz., that the idea of a "characteristic" definitively involves that of a "subject of characterization" – as an unwanted consequence for his interlocutor; and that he does so reflects his having read the Epistemologist as wanting to claim, to the contrary, that *svalakṣaṇas* are irreducible, being neither the characteristics *of* nor characterized *by* anything else. Thus, on

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[57] This is how I prefer to render *sāmānyalakṣaṇa*, since the conventional rendering of this as "universal" can be rather misleading. The category of *sāmānyalakṣaṇa* would, for example, include such entities as "sets" and (if such were ever explicitly raised in the Indian context) "propositions." It is also meant, however, to include items such as *saṃtānas*, mental "continua" – cases, that is, such as later exponents like Mokṣākaragupta will characterize as *vertical*, as contra horizontal, *sāmānyalakṣaṇas*. This usage, it seems to me, is without parallel in the Medieval scholastic context in which the word "universal" is particularly grounded.

[58] Cf., Chapter 2, nn.47, 48; recall that Katsura's observation was occasioned by Hattori's translation of *Pramāṇasamuccaya* 1.2.

Candrakīrti's reading (as on Katsura's), Dignāga did not wish to admit any separate "bearer" (*dharma*!) of his *svalakṣaṇas*, which is precisely why Candrakīrti can (as he does) urge that his interlocutor must think of *svalakṣaṇas* as simply "self-characterizing" – against which view, Candrakīrti here begins to exploit standard grammatical analyses of the "characterizing" relationship as necessarily involving both a *characteristic* (*lakṣaṇa*) and a *thing characterized* (*lakṣya*).

In order to appreciate the pertinence of this kind of argument, we must keep in mind Candrakīrti's overriding concern with how words are conventionally used. Thus, the argument here advances Candrakīrti's claim that any usage of the word *svalakṣaṇa* already presupposes the relational terms thematized by the grammarians, who are conventionally taken as normative for the Sanskritic tradition. The same may be said of the remainder of this exchange, in which Candrakīrti has his interlocutor appeal to what amounts to an alternative gloss on the *–ana* suffix. Thus, just as *pramāṇa* can be variously glossed as "that *by which* something is cognized" and "*what* is cognized,"[59] so, too, Candrakīrti anticipates that the Epistemologist might argue that the word *lakṣaṇa* picks out "what is characterized." Candrakīrti rejoins that this move will not help his interlocutor, and for the same reason as before: even if it is held that the word *lakṣaṇa* picks out an *object*, it still requires relation to some "instrument" which does the characterizing, "since that instrument by which something [i.e., some *object*] is characterized has the quality of being a thing other than an object (*yena tal lakṣyate tasya karaṇasya karmaṇo 'rthāntaratvāt*), owing to the impossibility of something's being characterized by itself (*tenaiva tasya lakṣyamāṇatvāsaṃbhavād*)."[60]

To complete Candrakīrti's basic characterization of the Epistemologist's position, we need only attend to the passage that immediately follows what we have just seen.

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[59] Cf., nn.6, 7 in chapter 3 of this dissertation.

[60] The foregoing passages occur at 59.7-60.3; cf., Appendix II, nn.14-15.

Having thus charged that his interlocutor's account incoherently posits something essentially self-characterizing, Candrakīrti now anticipates moves intended to salvage the possibility of precisely such a thing. Ultimately, this will lead to a consideration of the Epistemologist's account of *svasaṃvitti* ("reflexive awareness" or "apperception"), which will be adduced as the unique example of something that *is* at the same time both an object and an instrument. We can, however, appreciate Candrakīrti's basic point without entering that thicket[61]; for the main point in what follows is Candrakīrti's clarification of the sense in which the Epistemologist's understanding of *svalakṣaṇa* differs from what Candrakīrti takes to be the conventional sense. In view of its importance, Candrakīrti's text is here worth quoting at length:

> Here [in the world], that which is the nature (*svarūpa*) of existents, [i.e.,] their own, not shared with anything else, that is their defining characteristic (*svalakṣaṇa*). For example, the earth's [defining characteristic] is resistance, [the defining characteristic] of feeling is experience, [and the defining characteristic] of awareness is a conception regarding any object; for [in each of these cases,] by that [quality the thing in question] is characterized. By one who, disregarding (*avadhūya*) the usage which follows the familiar sense based on this (*iti kṛtvā*), [instead] accepts the definition [of *svalakṣaṇa*] as an object, and positing [at the same time] the instrumental nature of perceptual awareness, it is said [in effect] that one unique particular has the quality of being an object, and *another* unique particular has the quality of being an instrument. In this case, if the unique particular which is perceptual awareness is an instrument, then it must have a separate object (*tasya vyatiriktena karmaṇā bhavitavyam*). *This* is the fault [in your position].[62]

In this particular case, the examples of the conventional usage – which, we note, are taken from the *Abhidharmakośabhāṣyam*[63] – are particularly contrasted with a usage

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[61] Candrakīrti's critique of *svasaṃvitti* ("reflexive awareness") is, to be sure, interesting and significant, and his apparent argument that *svasaṃvitti* is (not only not ultimately but) not even *conventionally* valid occasioned much discussion in the Tibetan context; cf., Williams 1998. In the context of the present discussion, though, we can bracket the question of whether Candrakīrti's critique of *svasaṃvitti* is finally convincing, insofar as he will here have his interlocutor invoke the phenomenon simply as a proposed example of something that might in fact be self-characterizing.

[62] 60.4-61.2; cf., Appendix II, n.19.

[63] The adducing of *viṣayaprativijñapti* as the *svalakṣaṇa* of *vijñāna* occurs at *Abhidharmakośa* 1.16a (Pradhan 1975: 11: *vijñānaṃ prativijñaptiḥ, viṣayaṃ viṣayaṃ prati vijñaptir upalabdhir vijñānaskandha ity ucyate*)); *anubhava* as that of *vedanā* occurs at *Abhidharmakośa* 1.14 (*Ibid.*: 10: *vedanā-anubhavaḥ saṃjñā nimittodgrahaṇātmikā*); and *khara* as that of *pṛthivī* at *Abhidharmakośa* 1.12 (*Ibid.*: 8, with the characteristics of various *bhūtāni* given *yathākramam*). For *kāṭhinya* as synonymous with *khara*, cf., Pradhan 1975: 24.3, 78.7-8. Cf., also, *Madhyamakāvatāra* 6.202-3 (La Vallée Poussin 1970a: 316), where

which takes the word *svalakṣaṇa* as "denoting an object" (*karmasādhanam*).[64] It is not only with reference to Candrakīrti's chosen examples, then, but also with this contrast in mind that I render *svalakṣaṇa*, when Candrakīrti uses the word as he thinks it is conventionally used, as "defining characteristic"; and what seems to characterize the relationship between, say, earth and its "defining characteristic" (viz., "hardness" or "resistance") is the fact of their being *inseparable*, such that "hardness" is not an object that could be perceived apart from "earth." That is, when one encounters an instance of "earth," one *just is* encountering an instance of "hardness"; this is simply what it means for the latter to be a defining characteristic of the former. To be sure, we can separate a thing and its defining characteristic analytically, as we do when we specify which is the thing *being defined* ("earth," the *lakṣya*), and which is the thing adduced as its *definition* ("hardness," its *svalakṣaṇa*). What we cannot do, though, is *encounter* these separately as ontologically "given" entities. And this is precisely what is required, according to Candrakīrti, on the Epistemologist's usage of the term, which is such that we can render *svalakṣaṇa* as "unique particular" when it is the Epistemologist who is using the term. For epistemologists such as Dignāga, that is, *svalakṣaṇas* are the unique *objects* of the cognitive act which is perception, they are what (following Tillemans) perception encounters as "*naturally suited to be present to non-inferential awareness.*"[65]

Candrakīrti trots out a similarly Ābhidharmika list of "defining characteristics" (*svalakṣaṇas*) of all of the *skandhas*: "Form has the defining property (*svalakṣaṇa*) of color and shape; *vedanā* has the nature of experience; *saṃjñā* grasps characteristics; *saṃskāras* fashion [things]; the defining property of perceptual awareness is a conception regarding any object" (*gzugs ni gzugs ruṅ* [sic; read *raṅ*] *mtshan ñid can / tshor ba myoṅ ba'i bdag ñid can / 'du śes mtshan mar 'dzin pa ste / 'du byed mṅon par 'du byed pa'o // yul la so sor rnam rig pa / rnam śes raṅ gi mtshan ñid do /*).

[64] As noted in Appendix II, n.17, the Tibetan translation renders this as *las su sgrub pa*, "established as an object." For the sense of *-sādhana* as "denoting" or "expressive of," I follow Apte, p.1666, meaning #4. On the compound *karmasādhana*, see also Renou (1942: 125), who gives: "qui a l'objet-transitif (i.e. une notion passive) pour mode de réalisation." We could easily follow this lead and transpose this discussion into the key of grammatical terms (hence, e.g., "denoting an *accusative*"), with little change in significance.

[65] Tillemans 2000: 4.

Taken together, the two passages we have considered from Candrakīrti provide a clear sense of how he considers the Epistemologist's doctrine of *svalakṣaṇas* to differ from the examples of the Ābhidharmika usage of the term adduced by Candrakīrti. Thus, Candrakīrti rightly understands the Ābhidharmika usage as not denoting any kind of *object*; rather, it denotes the sort of "defining characteristics" which are, in fact, *abstractions*. Candrakīrti would concur, then, with Shoryu Katsura, who (as we saw in Chapter 2) notes that "*svalakṣaṇas* of Abhidharma ... [must] be regarded by Dignāga not as *svalakṣaṇas* but as *sāmānyalakṣaṇa*."[66] This point is underscored by Candrakīrti's characterization of the Epistemologist's usage as *karmasādhanam*, "denoting an object." Moreover, as Candrakīrti stresses in the first of the two passages we have just considered, "defining characteristics" are the kinds of abstractions that are definitively *inextricable* from the existents they define – they are not only not *objects*, but it makes no sense to think of encountering them in the way we encounter objects, since they are definitively *relational* abstractions. Among other things, this means they are necessarily instantiated in some *lakṣya*, some "bearer" of the defining property in question – and on Candrakīrti's reading, his interlocutor cannot coherently concede this, since his position requires that there be no additional *kind* of existent to which *svalakṣaṇas* could belong.

As I have suggested, what is most significant for Candrakīrti is that his interlocutor's usage cannot accommodate what Candrakīrti takes to be attested usage, with demonstration of such failure of adequacy to conventions being sufficient for Candrakīrti's purposes. It is interesting, though, that Candrakīrti reduces this failure to absurdity particularly by way of an argument to the effect that any attempt by the Epistemologist to accommodate conventional usage will issue in infinite regress. This fact helps make clear how Candrakīrti reads the Epistemologist's doctrine of

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[66] Cf., Chapter 2, n.33.

svalakṣaṇas; for all of the foregoing centrally has to do with Candrakīrti's basic rejection of *svalakṣaṇas* understood as *self-characterizing*. Candrakīrti's argument here can plausibly be understood, I think, as fundamentally similar to some contemporary arguments against the sort of "bare particulars" presupposed by "substratum theories" similar to the Ābhidharmika version of reductionism. Thus, the view that medium-sized dry goods are reducible to more fundamental constituents is often expressed in terms of a "bare substratum" in which various properties are instantiated, but which is itself without any properties. Such an account is intended to bring the exercise of reductionism to rest, explaining the numerical diversity of ontological primitives without presupposing that the reducible properties are themselves such primitives. It has been persuasively argued, however, that the idea of bare particulars as the "ultimate" (i.e., because themselves irreducible) exemplifiers of the properties of a whole is incoherent, insofar as putatively bare particulars can always be *essentially* characterized – that is, characterized by such "essential" properties as *being a substratum or a human being*. Michael Loux succinctly summarizes this line of argument:

> The difficulty is that once we concede this fact, we find that the very problem substrata were introduced to resolve arises in their case. Substrata turn out to be complexes or wholes themselves, complexes or wholes constituted by the attributes essential to them. Unfortunately, the attributes essential to any one substratum seem to be precisely those essential to any other. They are all essentially subjects for attributes, all essentially diversifiers, all essentially different from the number seven, all essentially colored if green, all essentially red or not red. But, then, while being numerically different from each other, they begin to look like qualitatively indiscernible entities. And so we need an account of their numerical diversity; and the only account that will do is one that posits a lower-level substratum in each of our original substrata, a lower-level substratum that makes each of our original substrata different from each other. But since nothing can be bare, the same problem arises for these new, lower-level substrata; and we seem once again to be off on an infinite regress.[67]

[67] Loux 1998: 116-17. Among the thinkers whom Loux here follows is Sellars; cf., Sellars 1963: 282-3n. Much the same point is also made in a passage in which Candrakīrti (apparently alluding to the Epistemologists' characterization of *svalakṣaṇas* as "indefinable") anticipates the appeal to *avācyatā* ("inexpressibility"; cf., *Prasannapadā* 64.10-13, given at Appendix II, n.31) – an appeal that Candrakīrti refuses on the grounds that we can, in fact, distinguish between the characteristic and its bearer, with appeal to ineffability only being appropriate "when there is no recognition of the mutual classification of terms; and where there is no recognition of [such mutual] classification, there, given the impossibility of

I suggest that Candrakīrti's opening argument against his interlocutor's doctrine of *svalakṣaṇas* is fundamentally similar. Thus, the point that Candrakīrti makes in terms of the "characterizing" relationship is that it is incoherent to think that anything without characteristics (any "bare particular") could in the end be all that really exists, insofar as any object (*karman*) we encounter as possessing characteristics must be in relation to what characterizes it (*karaṇa*). And just as with the line of argument summarized by Loux, the logic of Candrakīrti's argument against his interlocutor similarly trades on the charge that the Epistemologist's account involves an infinite regress – with such an argument gaining its power insofar as it is precisely the point of the Epistemologist's postulate to bring the reductionist project to rest in something not further reducible.

Clearly, then, Candrakīrti (like Katsura) understood epistemologists such as Dignāga as wanting to affirm that *svalakṣaṇas* do not themselves *have* any characteristics (and that they are not, in turn, the characteristics *of* anything else) – which is precisely why Candrakīrti can (as he does) take it as an unwanted consequence for his interlocutor that *svalakṣaṇas* must be the characteristics *of* something else. With this in mind, we might put the difference between the Ābhidharmika usage of *svalakṣaṇa* (which is what Candrakīrti favors) and the Epistemologist's Sanskritically, in terms of two different analyses of the compound *sva-lakṣaṇa*: on the Ābhidharmika usage, the compound is a *karmadhāraya*, such that a *svalakṣaṇa* denotes simply whatever "property" or "characteristic" (*lakṣaṇa*) is definitively "proper" or "specific" (*sva-*) to something (i.e., something's "*own* characteristic"); the Epistemologist, on the other hand, can be said to read the compound as a *bahuvrīhi*, such that *svalakṣaṇa* denotes what "has *itself* (*sva*) as (its only) characteristic." But recall (from Chapter 2) Dunne's characterization of Dharmakīrti's notion of *svalakṣaṇa*: the irreducibility of *svalakṣaṇas* "is best illustrated

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specifying, according to the difference [between them] (*viśeṣatas*), 'this is the characteristic, this is the subject,' there is complete absence of these two, as well."

by a genitive construction such as, 'The nature of the infinitesimal particle.' Dharmakīrti maintains that in such expressions the *dharma* is actually identical to the *dharmin* itself. The apparent separation of the *dharma* from the *dharmin* is simply part of the exclusion process, and is hence conceptual." If Candrakīrti and Katsura are right, it seems to me that Candrakīrti understands his interlocutor here to be after essentially the same idea[68]: in order to be consistent, the Ābhidharmika version of Buddhist reductionism cannot come to rest with the idea of *dharmas*, if such are thought to "have" some defining characteristic; rather, it must be pressed to the point where the only ontological primitives in the system are not even *analytically* resolvable into "properties" and "property-possessors." *Svalakṣaṇas*, on such a view, thus become not only unique, objective particulars, but *bare* particulars. And Candrakīrti's argument against this is that, insofar as the resultant idea presupposes something "self-characterizing," this idea of *svalakṣaṇas* is incoherent, opening up an infinite regress at precisely the point where it is invoked to bring such to rest.

It is easy to see, then, how Candrakīrti might think the Epistemologist thus assimilates *svalakṣaṇas* to the case of *svabhāva*, which represents (as we will see in the next chapter) the one notion that Candrakīrti will not countenance even in its conventional usage[69]; for if, as Michael Loux puts it, "Aristotle's notion of an essence just is the notion of the ontological correlate of a definition,"[70] we can surely understand

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[68] To the extent that Candrakīrti is accurate in representing his interlocutor's account of *svalakṣaṇa*, and also to the extent that we are (as argued at greater length in Appendix II) warranted in identifying this interlocutor as Dignāga, Candrakīrti thus provides an interesting perspective on the vexing question of how to understand Dignāga vis-à-vis Dharmakīrti (at least on the question of this point). For more on this, see Chapter 2.

[69] And indeed, the Ābhidharmika usage, too, conflates *svalakṣaṇa* and *svabhāva*; cf., Chapter 2, n.18. Note, too, that the last of the examples of the conventional usage of *svalakṣaṇa* given by Candrakīrti (i.e., "hardness" as that of earth) is, in fact, introduced in the *Abhidharmakośabhāṣyam* as the *svabhāva* of earth (Pradhan 1975: 8.19). In a way, then, it is Candrakīrti who here departs from conventional usage, insofar as he wishes to allow the conventional usage of *svalakṣaṇa* without sanctioning the (eminently conventional!) conflation thereof with *svabhāva*. On Candrakīrti's refusal to countenance even the *conventional* sense of *svabhāva*, cf., Chapter 5, nn.41-45.

[70] Loux 1995: 241.

Candrakīrti as refusing that a *svalakṣaṇa* ("definition") is properly reified as an "essence" (*svabhāva*). Thus, the Epistemologist's usage, on Candrakīrti's view, makes precisely the conflation that Candrakīrti considers most pernicious, using a word that conventionally means "defining characteristic" (and which therefore conventionally has the sense of something universal) to denote what is really an "ontological correlate" thereof.[71] Significantly, Candrakīrti shows this conflation to be incoherent simply by noting that, if this is accepted, a conventional usage of the word *svalakṣaṇa* cannot be accommodated. And again, to have shown this is sufficient for Candrakīrti's purposes, insofar as Candrakīrti's is the metaphysical claim that there *is* nothing more real than our conventions, so that any appeal for such is immediately incoherent. The salient points about this disagreement regarding *svalakṣaṇas*, then, are that, (1), Candrakīrti takes the idea of "defining characteristics" to be a constitutively *relational* idea, with his interlocutor's usage (as he sees it) incoherently requiring that it be possible to encounter them separately; and, (2), the Epistemologist cannot coherently accommodate his usage to that attested in familiar examples. Finally, we see again that Candrakīrti's argument is basically *a priori*; that is, it has to do only with what is involved in the concept of *svalakṣaṇa*, and not with what we may or may not experience.

4.iv. The critique of *svalakṣaṇas* vis-à-vis the category of *upādāya prajñapti*

After a couple of salvos that include an allusion to the *Madhyamakāvatāra*'s critique of the Yogācāra doctrine of *svasaṃvitti*, Candrakīrti returns to the examples we

[71] With "ontological correlate," indeed, possibly serving as a translation for *karmasādhanam*. Cf., Aristotle's point about this kind of conflation: "We must ... ask whether they [the first principles] are universal or what we call individuals. If they are universal, they will not be substances; for everything that is common indicates not a 'this' but a 'such,' but substance is a 'this.' And if we are not allowed to lay it down that a common predicate is a 'this' and a single thing, Socrates will be several animals – himself and 'man' and 'animal,' if each of these indicates a 'this' and a single thing." (*Metaphysics*, 1003a; McKeon 1941: 731) Something like the same issues, it seems to me, arise with respect to Dignāga's use of the word for "defining characteristic" (*svalakṣaṇa*) to denote perceived *objects*.

have seen him adduce as conventional usages of the word *svalakṣaṇa*. Resuming that line of discussion, Candrakīrti now attributes to his interlocutor the claim that, in fact, conventional usage *does* attest examples that are merely "self-relating," so that worldly convention *can* sanction the Epistemologist's understanding of *svalakṣaṇas* as non-relational. It is in answering this claim that Candrakīrti effectively introduces the category of *upādāya prajñapti* (which I will render as "relative indication"), which finally provides us with the bridge we need to link the critique of *svalakṣaṇas* with the clearest statement of what I am taking to be Candrakīrti's metaphysical claim. With the following passage, then, we can finally complete the set of correlations that, I suggest, is crucial to understanding Candrakīrti's project. The passage is at once difficult and important, and so again worth reproducing at length:

> [Objection:] Well, perhaps this could be [suggested]: Even when there is no possibility of characteristics apart from a "body" or a "head" – as [in the expressions] "the body of a statue," or "the head of Rāhu" –, there is [nevertheless] a relation of characteristic and thing-to-be-characterized; just as [in that case], here, too, there will be [a real relation] even when there is no possibility of any earth which is different from its unique particular (*svalakṣaṇa*), [so that we can make sense of the familiar expression,] "earth's *svalakṣaṇa*."
>
> [Reply:] It is not so, because [these cases] are not the same. For given that the words 'body' and 'head' function [only] in dependence upon other concomitant categories like intellect and so forth, and hands and so forth, the arising of a conception which has as its antecedent condition merely the words "body" and "head," is precisely one which requires the other, accompanying categories to complete the sense. [Hence, such a conception will be accompanied by the thoughts,] whose body? whose head? Another [person], with a desire to ignore the connection with the other characteristics, removes the expectation of [his] interlocutor by the suggestion (*dhvanin*) of the characteristics of statues and Rāhu, which [suggestion] is in conformity (*anuvidhāyin*) with mundane convention (*saṃketa*). This makes sense. But here, where there is no possibility of earth and so forth apart from resistance and so forth, the relation of characteristic and thing-to-be-characterized doesn't make sense....[72]

Here, Candrakīrti attributes to his interlocutor a final attempt to salvage his technical usage of the word *svalakṣaṇa*.[73] Specifically, Candrakīrti attributes to the

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[72] 66.1-8; cf., Appendix II, n.58.

[73] See Siderits 1981: 141-145 for a helpful discussion of this passage. Note, again, that Tsong-kha-

Epistemologist an appeal to conventional usage – i.e., to an example which is alleged to show that there might after all be cases where we *talk as though* there were a relation between two things, when in fact there is only one real referent. Thus, Candrakirti can expect his readers to be familiar with expressions such as "the body of a statue" and the "head of Rāhu," even though his readers can also be expected to know that a statue *just is* a "body,"[74] and that Rāhu – a celestial being who, having been beheaded, now exists only as the disembodied head whose "swallowing" of the sun and moon accounts for eclipses, which re-emerge when they pass below his neck – *just is* a head.[75] These examples are meant to show, then, that conventional usage might thus attest expressions like "earth's

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pa takes Candrakirti to be considering Bhāvaviveka here; cf., Eckel 1978; Thurman 1991: 293, n.13; and n.8, above.

Yotsuya (1999), without ever raising the issue explicitly, provides what seems to me to be a useful clarification regarding why Tsong-kha-pa would be inclined to assimilate this discussion to the case of Bhāvaviveka. On Tsong-kha-pa's view, the crucial distinction between the "Svāntrika" Madhyamaka of Bhāvaviveka and Candrakirti's "Prāsaṅgika" Madhyamaka involves the concept of *svalakṣaṇa*. Specifically, for Tsong-kha-pa the crux of the issue is that Bhāvaviveka must accept the existents posited by an opponent as "being established by virtue of self-character" (*rang gi mtshan nyid kyis grub pa* = *svalakṣaṇena siddha*). Crucially, this is tantamount, for Tsong-kha-pa, to being established *svabhāvena*; that is, he takes *svalakṣaṇa* to be roughly equivalent to *svabhāva*. Now we will, to be sure, note that Candrakirti will not admit the category of *svabhāva* as even *conventionally* valid, and, moreover, that he is wary of the Epistemologist's reification of *svalakṣaṇa* (his acceptance of it as *karmasādhanam*, "denoting an object"), with this ontologizing tendency amounting to a slide towards *svabhāva*.

Nevertheless, Candrakirti *defends* the conventional usage of *svalakṣaṇa*, and brings it up in reference to the category of *svabhāva* only to *distinguish* the two. There is, indeed, only one other occurrence of the word *svalakṣaṇa* in the *Prasannapadā* (i.e., outside of the critique of Dignāga) – specifically, at p.261.4, as part of a passage discussed below (cf., Chapter 5, nn.41-45), where Candrakirti refuses even the *conventional* sense of *svabhāva*. For now, suffice to say that Tsong-kha-pa's understanding of this whole debate involves a sense of *svalakṣaṇa* that is, I think, not present in Candrakirti. Thus, we can note that Thurman (translating Tsong-kha-pa) is quite right in seeing the present discussion as crucially involving different understandings of the word *svalakṣaṇa*: "... the intrinsic identity (*svalakṣaṇa*) involved in (this sort of) intrinsically identifiable status is altogether quite different from the 'ultimate particular' (*svalakṣaṇa*) explained precisely as 'functional capacity' in the logicians' treatises, and from the 'defining characteristic' (*svalakṣaṇa*) explained as that which characterizes (something as) different from everything else, such as heat in the case of fire, in the *Abhidharma Scripture*, etc." (Thurman 1991: 292) What I am pointing out, however, is that it is really only the latter two senses of *svalakṣaṇa* that are in play in our text from the *Prasannapadā*, with Tsong-kha-pa himself having introduced (in the first occurrence reflected in Thurman's translation) an additional sense. For Thurman's second sense ("'ultimate particular' explained precisely as 'functional capacity'"), cf., *Pramāṇavārttika* 2.3 (given in Chapter 2, n.31); the third sense is clearly what Candrakirti has urged against Dignāga.

[74] Most translators of this passage have followed Stcherbatsky (1927: 158) in rendering *śilāputraka* as "statue," though Thurman (1991: 292) follows the Tibetan translation (*mchi gu*) in opting for the primary sense of the word as "pestle." This is a possible reading, though it would seem to suggest that this case exemplifies a different point than that of "Rāhu's head," and I am not sure what that different point would be. In contrast, I take both cases to be adduced as examples of expressions that, though involving two terms, refer to only one thing. Cf., Appendix II, n.36.

[75] For a brief version of the myth of Rāhu, see O'Flaherty 1975: 278.

svalakṣaṇa,"[76] despite the fact that earth *just is* (reducible to) the "unique particulars" (*svalakṣaṇa*) that are what we really encounter in perception.

Candrakīrti rejoins that the examples of "the body of a statue" and "the head of Rāhu" are not, in fact, comparable to the case of "earth's *svalakṣaṇa*," since the conventional function of any notion characterized as a *svalakṣaṇa* is not such as to *qualify* any predicate (i.e., such as to pick it out from among any number of similar predicates), but rather to *define* something. That is, "qualification" (*viśeṣaṇa*) is called for only when there is some syntactic "expectation" (*ākāṅkṣā*),[77] such that we need to know more in order to know precisely what is being picked out. Thus, when we encounter some reference to a head, we know that it could belong to anybody, so we expect to be told whose it is; hence, the genitive relation here ("the head *of Rāhu*") is called for simply insofar as we expect some qualification in order to know which of the countless possible heads is in question. In contrast, since there cannot meaningfully be any earth which is not "earth" *by definition* – which is not, that is, possessed of the characteristic that uniquely defines earth as such – we do not, when encountering some instance of "hardness," wonder "whose" it is, since hardness, by definition, always

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[76] *pṛthivyāḥ svalakṣaṇam*. I have left this occurrence of the word *svalakṣaṇa* untranslated in order to reflect the fact that Dignāga is here simply reporting the familiar usage, while remaining neutral with respect to how we understand the word. It is then in the other occurrence of the word in the interlocutor's objection ("even when there is no possibility of any earth which is different from its unique particular") that we have the sense that is specific to Dignāga; hence, my rendering of *svalakṣaṇa* there as "unique particular." Siderits (1981: 142) says, "it should be pointed out that here the opponent has reverted to the traditional usage of 'svalakṣaṇa', as meaning 'own defining characteristic'; this is made clear in his reference to hardness as the svalakṣaṇa of earth." But it seems to me that we can understand Candrakīrti's interlocutor as simply admitting the conventionality of the example Candrakīrti has adduced, and thus agreeing to report the example as it conventionally occurs. This is, in other words, simply the usage that Candrakīrti has challenged his interlocutor to accommodate, and it will become clear from the way the Epistemologist wants to use the examples he here adduces that he wants to accommodate it precisely to his own, technical sense of *svalakṣaṇa*; for the whole point is that he wants another conventional example to show how it could be that people say things like "earth's *svalakṣaṇa*," even when, for Dignāga, only one referent (the *svalakṣaṇa*) is finally real.

[77] So, for example, Siderits (1981: 142), who thus refers to "ākāṅkṣa or expectation, the notion that a given occurrence of a term is productive of the expectation that certain associated terms will also occur." In rendering the passage, though, I have dispensed with this standard translation of *ākāṅka*, instead plugging the relevant grammatical sense ("Requiring some words to complete the sense"; cf., Apte 1992: 305) into the passage (which I thus rendered "requires the other, accompanying categories to complete the sense").

belongs to earth.[78] Candrakīrti's initial response, then, simply elaborates the conditions that must obtain in order for some grammatical qualification to be called for, and urges that conventional cases like "Rāhu's head" are justified only insofar as words like 'head' conventionally require some such qualification to complete the sense.

What turns out to be at stake here is whether or not our conventions are thought to require some "really existent" *basis* in order to be possible. In this regard, it is interesting to consider a passage from Sthiramati's *Triṃśikābhāṣya*, which urges, against the Mādhyamikas, that such is precisely the case; "for conventional [reality] without some basis does not stand to reason."[79] The word I here render as "basis" is *upādāna*, which derives from the verbal root √*dā*, preceded by the prefixes *upa-* and *ā-*. The resulting verb has the sense of "appropriating," with the nominal form *upādāna* thus meaning "appropriation" or, in many cases, "what is appropriated." The word figures prominently in the Buddhist context, occurring, for example, as the ninth member of the standard twelvefold chain of dependent origination, where it has the sense of "grasping."[80] In this context, then, the word has an eminently active sense, as reflected in the correlated notion of *upādānaskandha*, the "acquisitive aggregates."[81]

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[78] As Siderits (*ibid.*) rightly notes, "Here we must remember that 'hardness' is doing duty for a *unique* defining characteristic, one which pertains to nothing but earth."

[79] *na hi saṃvṛtir nirupādānā yujyate* (Lévi 1926: 16.13-14). Cf., n.139, below, for a strikingly similar contention from David Burton (1999). For Sthiramati (as, it seems, for Burton), the "really existent" basis of conventions is awareness (*vijñāna*). More on this below.

[80] In this context, *upādāna* is preceded by *tṛṣṇā*, "thirst" or "desire," and in turn produces *bhava*, "being" or "existence." Thus, it is in dependence upon desire that there is the "appropriation" (*upādāna*) of continued existence, which in turn leads to birth, etc. See, e.g., the standard list as adumbrated at *Mahāvyutpatti* 2242-2253 (with five additional states appended thereafter).

[81] On this, see, e.g., Kapstein 2001: 25-26, n.39. With this active sense of the word apparently in mind, Hayes (1994: 355) notes: "[The word *upādāna*] names the action of clinging or being attached. What this means, then, is that as a result of one's attachments, one creates the objects of one's own experience." Such a notion is, no doubt, in play in this word, though Hayes invokes this point as part of an interpretation of *MMK* 24.18 opposed to the one I will suggest; see below, n.137. Among my suggestions here is that *MMK* 24.18 ends up reading rather differently if, instead, one stresses the sense of the word that Candrakīrti seems to emphasize.

The word can also, however, have an *objective* sense, designating the causal or material *basis* of the action. Reflecting this sense, the word often denotes "fuel," i.e., that which is consumed or "appropriated" by fire.[82] While in many contexts the word *upādāna* will admit of either reading, I will particularly assume the latter, objective sense, since this seems to me most consistent with Candrakīrti's use of the term (as well as that of Sthiramati in the passage just cited).[83] Particularly with the sense of this as "basis" in mind, then, we might propose that Buddhist Epistemologists like Dignāga understand *svalakṣaṇas* as the really existent "basis" (*upādāna*) of (in this case) linguistic usage; as Siderits puts it, "The realm of the constructed requires a base of reals ... and this role is played by the svalakṣaṇa."[84] Thus, Candrakīrti's interlocutor has proposed examples like "Rāhu's head" as showing that we often seem to refer to two things in cases where we really know there to be only one "real" referent; and he needs to show this since he wishes to accommodate the familiar example of "earth's *svalakṣaṇa*" – a usage in which there seem to be two referents – while yet insisting that there is, ultimately, only one *real* referent (one *upādāna*): the "unique particulars" (*svalakṣaṇas*) which he claims are all that really exist.[85] Candrakīrti rejoins, however, that the salient point about the case of

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[82] See, e.g., Rhys Davids and Stede (1921-1925: 149) and Edgerton (1970: 145), both of whom cite this as the primary meaning. See also Apte 1992: 471 (meanings 9 and 10). Of course, these different senses of the word *upādāna* reflect the different glosses of the *–ana* suffix; cf., then, Chapter 3, nn.6-7 (vis-à-vis the word *pramāṇa*), as well as Candrakīrti's citation of Pāṇini's rule on this (Appendix II, n.15).

[83] Matthew Kapstein (personal communication) has stressed, however, that Candrakīrti's discussion of the relations between a chariot and its parts will look rather different if instead the active sense of the word is seen in play; see below, n.133. See also more on Sthiramati (for whom the really existent *upādāna* turns out to be *vijñāna*, "awareness"), n.109, below.

[84] Siderits 1981: 130.

[85] I should point out, though, that my translation of Candrakīrti's talk here of *upādāna* as concerning the underlying "basis" or *referents* of expressions would have to be qualified vis-à-vis the theory of *reference* which Dignāga adumbrates under the heading of *apohavāda*. Thus, the point of the *apoha* doctrine (on which, cf., inter alia, Hayes 1988: 183, ff.) is to avoid allowing that really existent universals are the direct referents of words. In the present context, in contrast, I follow Candrakīrti in seeing what I think we can characterize as an *ontological* issue – i.e., one concerning *what there is* in the world that makes our linguistic conventions possible. It may be that Candrakīrti (who, as far as I can tell, nowhere addresses *apohavāda*) underestimates the subtlety of Dignāga's doctrine. Hayes, for one, would likely think so; consider, for example, his explication (1988: 208) of how Dignāga accounts for the question of whether or not different words are synonymous: "If one term is never observed to be applied to objects to which another term is applied, then the terms are contraries. There is no need to ask *why* it is that, for

"Rāhu's head" is not its having only one real referent (one *upādāna*), but simply its satisfying a semantic expectation such as does not arise in the case of "earth's defining characteristic."

I have thus suggested framing this disagreement in terms of the "basis" (*upādāna*) of our conventions in order to anticipate Candrakīrti's next move; for he now transposes the discussion into precisely this key, ringing the changes on the verb *upā-√dā* in order to make the point that familiar cases such as "Rāhu's head" are not to be distinguished from "earth's *svalakṣaṇa*" by virtue of the former's having any "real" referent. He starts, though, by apparently making the opposite point, seemingly crediting the various terms here precisely with "real existence" (*sadbhāva*):

> Moreover, because of the real existence of the characteristic of appropriator (*upādātṛ*) on the part of the statue, which has as its appropriated substratum (*upādāna*) a body – [a characteristic] which is familiar without analysis, included in ordinary transactions – and [also] because of the real existence of [the characteristic of] appropriator on the part of Rāhu, who has as appropriated substratum a head, [because of the real existence of these,] just as [in the case of] derivatively [existent entities] such as the person, this example doesn't make sense.

That the point at issue is a fundamentally ontological one is clear from Candrakīrti's thus adducing an initially surprising reading of the case of "derivative" or "supervenient" entities such as persons (*pudgalādiprajñapti*) – with his language thus alluding back to the Ābhidharmika ontological debate about what exists as *dravyasat* ("substantially existent"), and what exists as *prajñaptisat* ("derivatively existent").[86] Candrakīrti's point

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example, the word 'oak' is not applied to any object to which the word 'vase' is applicable, for it is sufficient simply to know *that* the two terms have disjoint extensions. If pressed to answer why the two terms have disjoint extensions, we can only say that this is due to the fact that our linguistic conventions are such that the two words are not conventionally applicable to the same range of objects. But there is not necessarily a basis in reality for our conventions being as they are." If I understand the present section of the *Prasannapadā* correctly, Candrakīrti is, in effect, urging that his interlocutor says otherwise; and, Hayes's nuanced and sympathetic account of *apohavāda* notwithstanding, Candrakīrti may, insofar as he has shown Dignāga's use of the word *svalakṣaṇa* unable to accommodate conventional usage, have some purchase against Dignāga specifically vis-à-vis *svalakṣaṇas*.

[86] Cf., Chapter 2, nn.20-21.

here is surprising insofar as he seems quite explicitly to credit such entities here with "real existence" (*sadbhāva*).

As "real," at least, as any referent *can* be – and this qualification is, finally, the point that Candrakīrti is driving at. That the "real existence" thus attributed to the various referents in these examples is only the sort that is *conventionally* admitted is immediately made clear:

> For just as a self, critically examined, is impossible as [something] separate from form and so forth, but nonetheless, according to mundane convention (*lokasaṃvṛtyā*), it has existence (*asya astitvam*), relative to the aggregates (*skandhān upādāya*) – so, too, with respect to Rāhu and the statue; hence, there is no establishment of the example.

These have "real existence," then, only to the extent that they are left *unanalyzed* since, as Candrakīrti explains, "such critical analysis (*itthaṃvicāra*) doesn't operate in ordinary communication." That is, what defines the conventional is precisely the absence of any analytic search for something more real than what meets the eye. The things thus credited with conventionally "real existence" cannot, however, withstand critical examination any more than the "self" (*ātman*) whose reality Buddhists are devoted to refuting. The "real existence" thus allowed, then, is only the sort which is attributed "by mundane convention" (*lokasaṃvṛtyā*), just like that of the self. And the existence thus allowed to these things is qualified by one final permutation of *upā-√dā*; thus, the existence of the self is allowed *skandhān upādāya*. While this might be rendered as "having appropriated the aggregates," the gerund *upādāya* also functions as a frozen form, such that it can also be rendered as "with reference to" or (as I have done) "relative to." In other words, the qualification *upādāya* becomes a synonym for *dependently*.

The word *upādāya*, then, qualifies a *way of existing*; that is, what exists *upādāya* exists "relatively" or "dependently" – with the existence of the self, as Candrakīrti here

says, being *relative to* the aggregates into which it can be analyzed.[87] And Candrakīrti's point is that conventions invariably require some *relationship* such as is reflected by this qualifier; thus, as Candrakīrti says in the *Madhyamakāvatāra*, "It is not reasonable that the *upādātṛ* and the *upādāna* be the same, since in that case the action and the agent would be the same."[88] So, too, for the case of *svalakṣaṇas*, as such are conventionally understood. Candrakīrti has, to be sure, made it hard to assimilate the case of *svalakṣaṇas* to this discussion, since he earlier stressed that *svalakṣaṇas* (in his preferred sense of "defining characteristic") are not the sort of things that are thus "taken up" (*upādāna*); indeed, he has stressed that the conventional sense of "defining characteristics" is such that "there is no possibility of earth and so forth apart from resistance and so forth," in which case "the relation of characteristic and thing-to-be-characterized doesn't make sense."[89] While the usage Candrakīrti himself had stressed might thus seem to counter the present point regarding the reality of analytically separable *upādāna* and *upādātṛ*, Candrakīrti nevertheless makes clear that what he finally means to stress against his interlocutor is simply their being related as "mutually interdependent":

> In the same way, even if (*yady api*), on the part of earth and so forth, there is no subject [when] being considered apart from resistance and so forth, and [even if the] characteristic, as separate from the subject, is without a locus, nevertheless (*tathāpi*), it exists conventionally – the master [i.e., Nāgārjuna] settled the proof

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[87] Though Candrakīrti will, of course, immediately urge in turn that the aggregates themselves are reducible. It is puzzling, though, that the self's existence *skandhān upādāya* is allowed as "conventional"; for it would seem that the "convention" in the matter would really be that the self exists *ātmanā* or *svabhāvena*! (Cf., Appendix, n.41, for more thoughts on this.) But this is, of course, the one convention that Candrakīrti will not countenance.

[88] 6.137a-b (La Vallée Poussin 1970a: 259): *len po rang nyer len gcig rigs dngos min / de lta na las byed po gcig nyid 'gyur...* Here, the context is Candrakīrti's well-known analysis of the seven possible relations between a chariot and its parts (and, correspondingly, between a person and the aggregates); in particular, he is here disallowing that the self could be *equivalent* to the body, which would amount, on Candrakīrti's view, to allowing that "agent" (*kartṛ*) and "action" (*karma*) are the same.

[89] See above, n.72.

> by establishment [of all these categories] as simply being mutually interdependent (*parasparāpekṣāmātratayā*).[90]

Finally, Candrakīrti presses this point home vis-à-vis the "aggregates" (*skandhas*), which I would suggest can here be seen as doing duty for the whole menagerie of Ābhidharmika categories that are candidates for what is *dravyasat* – that is, the categories to which superveniently existent (*prajñaptisat*) entities such as persons can be reduced, but which themselves are held by Ābhidharmikas to exist "substantially" (*dravyatas*). Thus, having argued that the respective terms in expressions such as "Rāhu's head" (the *upādāna* and *upādātṛ*) exist, like the self, only conventionally, Candrakīrti now says that the same is also true of the analytical categories of the Ābhidharmikas:

> And it is not [the case that] there is the impossibility only of statues, and so forth, when they are investigated by reasoning. Rather, according to an argument which is going to be set forth [later on], there is no possibility of form and feelings and so forth, either; hence, their existence, too, like that of the statue, would have to be accepted as conventional. And this is not how [you accept them]; hence, [your position is] false.[91]

On Candrakīrti's version of the Buddhist reductionist project, then, *nothing* withstands ultimate critical scrutiny; once we open up a critical analysis, "there is no possibility of form and feelings and so forth, either" – no possibility, that is, that the *skandhas* (of which Candrakīrti here gives the first two from the standard list of five) will survive as an ultimately existent remainder. My suggestion is that the *ādi* ("and so forth") here can bring in all of the similar categories that had been adduced by Buddhists as the really existent remainder of critical analysis – including the Epistemologist's *svalakṣaṇas*, which (as I suggested in Chapter 2) can be seen as representing the culmination of this ontological project of enumeration. That Candrakīrti thinks his interlocutor retains this vision of the reductionist project seems clear from his conclusion: his interlocutor *would* (optative) have to admit that even categories such as the *skandhas* (and *svalakṣaṇas*)

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[90] For remarks on the uneasiness of fit here (reflected in Candrakīrti's concession: "*even if*, on the part of earth..."), cf., n.93, below.

[91] The foregoing passages occur at *Prasannapadā* 67.3-68.4; cf., Appendix II, n.45.

cannot withstand "critical examination" (*vicāra*); but he does not, and that is, in the final analysis, precisely why his position is false (*asat*).[92] This conclusion neatly captures a crucial difference between Candrakīrti and those Buddhists who, like Dignāga, retain a commitment to the Ābhidharmika version of Buddhist reductionism: for the latter, entities are reducible to objective, "unique particulars" (*svalakṣaṇāni*), but these are held to be further irreducible, and thus, ultimately to exist in some important way; Candrakīrti, in contrast, maintains that the only way to be consistent about the reductionist project is to acknowledge that one can never "reach the bottom." The whole point just is that there is nothing which is further irreducible.

And such, finally, is the point that has been emphasized by Candrakīrti's assimilation of the discussion of *svalakṣaṇas* to the example of "derivative existents such as persons" (*pudgalādiprajñaptivat*), which, as all Buddhists can be expected to agree, really exist only as "dependent upon the aggregates" (*skandhān upādāya*). Thus, Candrakīrti has urged against his interlocutor that the salient point about examples like "Rāhu's head" is not that there are two terms but only one "real" referent; rather, the salient point is simply that there are two terms *only insofar as convention* requires both terms – and this because a "head" is conventionally the sort of thing that might belong to any number of creatures, such that we have some "expectation" of being told *whose* head it is. With "earth's *svalakṣaṇa*," the *convention* does not require that we think of two referents, since the convention regarding "defining characteristics" just is that they are inseparable, so that the convention regarding "hardness" is that it could only be the hardness *of earth*.

The point, therefore, is simply that we can explain our use of expressions in terms of what *convention* requires, with its being unnecessary that there be something more

[92] It should be noted, though, that there is quite likely a textual problem here, and that I have made what seems to me the best sense of this conclusion by refusing an emendation proposed by La Vallée Poussin. Cf., Appendix II, n.44.

"real" behind them which can be adduced as what makes them possible. And Candrakīrti has here advanced this point by introducing, among other things, the idea that what characterizes "derivatively (existent entities) such as the person" (*pudgalādiprajñaptivat*) is their existing "dependently" or "relatively" (*upādāya*). Thus, it is interesting that there is a passage which is not preserved in the available Sanskrit texts of the *Prasannapadā*, but which concludes this section in the Tibetan translation, telling us succinctly what Candrakīrti takes himself to have been discussing here, and where to look for further comment: "This presentation of *upādāya prajñapti* is also extensively taught in the *Madhyamakāvatāra*, so that should be consulted, too."[93] According to the Tibetan translation of our text, then, Candrakīrti has here[94] been presupposing another, more focused discussion specifically of the words *prajñapti* and *upādāya* as a correlated pair. Let us, then, see how these coordinated terms are unpacked in the *Madhyamakāvatāra* (together with Candrakīrti's own *bhāṣya* thereon) – and specifically, in *Madhyamakāvatāra* 6.158-165, which is almost certainly the section to which Candrakīrti alludes at the end of our passage from the *Prasannapadā*.[95] Attention

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[93] Cf., Appendix II, n.45. Note that Candrakīrti's concession in a passage above (n.90, above) suggests that there is, in fact, some difficulty in thus assimilating the discussion of *svalakṣaṇas* to the case of the *upādāna / upādātṛ* relation. Thus, he there allowed that *even if* the conventional idea of a "defining characteristic" is such that the expression "earth's *svalakṣaṇa*" will not really admit of analytical separation into *upādāna* and *upādātṛ* (i.e., insofar as the convention regarding "defining characteristics" is such that "there is no possibility of things like earth apart from things like resistance"), it is *nevertheless* the case that Nāgārjuna established these as mutually interdependent. Candrakīrti seems, then, to punt with respect to this, and to allow that all he really means to introduce with the *upādāna / upādātṛ* relation is the idea of "simply being mutually interdependent" (*parasparāpekṣāmātratay*). If Candrakīrti's transposition of the discussion thus seems in the end not to line up very precisely, there is nevertheless an interesting precedent for his representing the discussion of *svalakṣaṇas* as one that is properly subsumed under the discussion of *upādāya prajñapti*; for Buddhapālita at one point gives a series of examples of things that must be understood as "*upādāya prajñapyate*." Among them: "A *lakṣya*, too, is indicated relative to a *lakṣaṇa*; a *lakṣaṇa*, in turn, is indicated relative to a *lakṣya*. In that way, it makes no sense that these be established in any other way except as indicated relative to these" (Walleser 1970: 141: *mtshan nyid kyi gzhi yang mtshan nyid la brten nas gdags la / mtshan nyid kyang mtshan nyid kyi gzhi de nyid la brten nas gdags so / de ltar de dag la bltos te gdags pa ma gtogs par rnam pa gzhan gang gis kyang de dag 'brub par mi 'thad do*).

[94] It is not immediately clear how much of the previous discussion is to be included as having been concerned with a "presentation of *upādāya prajñapti*"; presumably, though, this goes back at least to the point where Candrakīrti first adduces what he takes to be the properly conventional usage of *svalakṣaṇa* (p.60.5), and it is quite possible that the entire discussion of *svalakṣaṇas* is thus being characterized as one on *upādāya prajñapti*.

[95] Note, though, that in a footnote to Tsong-kha-pa's reiteration of Candrakīrti's concluding sentence, Thurman (1991: 295, n.19) refers us instead to *Madhyamakāvatāra* 6.32, ff. It will, I think, become

to this will elaborate Candrakīrti's account of the Buddhist reductionist project, and will give us the conceptual terms we need to unpack the text that represents what seems to me the clearest statement of the metaphysical claim I am attributing to Candrakīrti.

4.v. *MMK* 24.18 and Candrakīrti's metaphysical claim: Relative *indication* as an example of dependent *origination*

I have, to this point, several times alluded to Candrakīrti's own metaphysical claim as having something to do with there being nothing more "real" than our conventions, insofar as 'conventionally' is the only way that anything *can* exist. I have also anticipated the idea that his metaphysical claim can be characterized in terms of things only existing *relationally*. These two ways of speaking might seem, prima facie, to reflect rather different sorts of claims; for the former seems to suggest a specifically linguistic or coherentist sort of conventionalism, while the latter seems instead to be a more properly ontological claim. That is, talk of "conventions" would seem to advance a strictly epistemic point (i.e., a point about our subjective perspective *on* the world); the category of *pratītyasamutpāda* ("dependent origination"), on the other hand, seems to represent an ontological point (i.e., one about how things objectively are *in* the world). It is my understanding, however, that Candrakīrti's elaboration of the phenomenon of *upādāya prajñapti* is concerned precisely to collapse these two senses, in favor of (what else?) a middle way between epistemology and ontology.

What I am now going to propose, in other words, is that when Candrakīrti (following Nāgārjuna) identifies the seemingly epistemic category of *upādāya prajñapti* with the seemingly ontological category of *pratītyasamutpāda*, he is arguing, in effect,

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sufficiently clear that the passages to which I will now attend provide more than enough reason to warrant us in relating it to the topic of *upādāya prajñapti* – though of course, given the absence of precise footnotes in Indian philosophy, one can never be sure just what might have been in Candrakīrti's mind!

that the phenomena of our linguistic and other epistemic conventions do not represent an independent, internally coherent perspective *on* reality; rather, they are an *example of* (and are thus involved with) reality, with their necessarily interdependent functioning simply exemplifying the same conditions that obtain with respect to all existents.[96] Another way to say this is to say that our linguistic and other epistemic conventions are not only *mutually* interdependent for their meaning and function, but that they are also dependent *on the world they describe* (which in turn exists only dependently or relatively). Candrakīrti's distinctive metaphysical claim, then, is that *existing conventionally* is a phenomenon of the same order as *existing dependently* – a claim, it seems to me, whose significance we might appreciate by invoking Donald Davidson's apt remark about the process of understanding metaphors: "Should we call this process learning something about the world or learning something about language? An odd question, since what is learned is that a bit of language refers to a bit of the world."[97]

With his full-blown treatment of *upādāya prajñapti*, then, we can finally elaborate the metaphysical claim I am attributing to Candrakīrti. What is crucial for our understanding of Candrakīrti as making transcendental arguments is that it is this metaphysical claim which is such as to *require* his refusal of the Epistemologist's demands for specifically *a posteriori* justification. The specific nature of Candrakīrti's metaphysical claim, in other words, will bring into play something like the mode of *necessity* (which I have said characterizes transcendental arguments), insofar as it is this metaphysical claim which makes it *necessarily* the case that, given Candrakīrti's intuitions, his interlocutor's particular demands for justification are misplaced. It is, to be sure, important to note that Candrakīrti never explicitly thematizes the issue in terms of what we would characterize in terms of the logical mode of "necessity," and indeed that

[96] Cf., n.22, above, on the classification of epistemic instruments as "existents."

[97] Davidson 1984: 251.

an absence of such explicit thematization is characteristic of Indian philosophy more generally.[98] My point is simply that Candrakīrti's understanding and deployment of the category of *upādāya prajñapti* is what will make the Epistemologist's demands, on Candrakīrti's reading, self-refuting, such that the Epistemologist cannot argue *against* Candrakīrti's claims without already *presupposing* them. For Candrakīrti, in other words, it is finally the fact that all phenomena are dependent or relative that is chiefly violated by the Epistemologist's *a posteriori* appeal to privileged *pramāṇas*; and to the extent that the whole point of the Buddhist project (as Candrakīrti sees it) just is to advance this claim that all phenomena are dependent, his interlocutor's project necessarily stands in contradiction with precisely the project it is supposedly meant to advance.[99]

[98] Thus, Matthew Kapstein (following B. K. Matilal and J. N. Mohanty) has aptly observed that "necessity is often *expressed* in Indian arguments, for instance, through the use of the gerundive, but what is in question here is whether it was *theorized* as a feature of logical operations" (2001: 157n). Evidence of this kind of *expression* of the mode of necessity is very much in evidence in Candrakīrti, who frequently uses the gerundive *bhavitavyam* (as also the indeclinable *avaśyam*) to say what must, in various circumstances, necessarily be the case given his interlocutor's commitments; cf., e.g., Appendix II, nn.18, 22, 23, 42.

[99] Interestingly, there is a text on the subject of *upādāya prajñapti* attributed to Dignāga, extant only in Chinese translation: the *Ch'ü-yin-chia-she-lun* (Taishō 1622), or **Upādāyaprajñaptiprakaraṇa*, which has been summarized by Hidenori Kitagawa (1957). While I am not competent to comment on the Chinese text (or the likelihood of its attribution to Dignāga), Kitagawa's summary suggests that the content of the work indeed deploys a conceptual apparatus such as we would expect from Dignāga, and it is therefore useful to keep this article in mind as a statement regarding the way in which Dignāga would likely deploy the category of *upādāya prajñapti*. As Kitagawa notes, though, the available Chinese text seems precisely to *reverse* these categories; thus, according to this text only *svalakṣaṇas* can serve as the "objects of designation" (which is how Kitagawa renders *prajñapti*). "Why is it ... that only the elements of the universe are truly capable of being the objects of designation? The reason is that they are real in the strict sense of the word and, therefore, are in possession of the real *svabhāvas* (=independent natures)." (1957: 133) What we would expect, though, would be rather for the category of *sāmānyalakṣaṇas* to line up with *prajñaptayaḥ*, insofar as *prajñapti* typically denotes the kinds of wholes that are extrapolated, by way of conceptual elaboration, from parts.

Kitagawa's warranted suspicions about the authenticity of this text's attribution to Dignāga make it all the more puzzling that Radhika Herzberger (1986) appeals to this text as evidence for her contention that, with the category of *upādāya prajñapti*, Dignāga effectively posits something intermediate between *sva-* and *sāmānya-lakṣaṇas*. Thus, according to Herzberger, Dignāga "proposed granting spatio-temporal continuants [i.e., instances of what later Epistemologists will call "horizontal universals"] such as human bodies a status in between the illusory and the unconstructed, a status he described as 'constructed in dependence on realities' [=*upādāya prajñapyate*]...." (Quoted by Katsura 1991: 133) The questionable authenticity of this text is only part of what makes Herzberger's a dubious claim, for more on which, cf., Katsura 1991. Be that as it may, Kitagawa's brief summary nevertheless provides a useful overview of the kind of philosophical move Dignāga would likely make with respect to Candrakīrti's favored category, even if the details of the execution of that move cast doubt on the authenticity of this particular text.

Before resuming with Candrakīrti, though, a word on translation equivalents is in order. I have already noted something about the syntactic and semantic function of the gerund *upādāya* (though we will shortly see that Candrakīrti says more about this). Here, I would like to say a bit about how best to translate *prajñapti*, so that we can appreciate the significance of my decision to render it as "indication." It has for, some time, been common to render *prajñapti* as "designation" or "concept."[100] Such renderings suggest an exclusively *cognitive* notion, and specifically a linguistic one. Given such an understanding, the claim that everything exists in some way as a *prajñapti* would be tantamount to the claim that *only mental artifacts exist*.[101] To the extent that this understanding remains unquestioned, it becomes regrettable that some scholars have followed the lead of Paul Williams, who has quite rightly emphasized that the Mādhyamika deployment of the notion of *prajñapti* is best understood vis-à-vis the Ābhidharmika debate concerning what is *dravyasat* and what is *prajñaptisat*.[102] For while it is surely correct to understand Mādhyamikas as characteristically refusing that *anything* exists as *dravyasat*, and that everything therefore exists only as *prajñaptisat*,[103] it is only a misleading and undefended rendering of *prajñapti* that licenses the further claim that Madhyamaka thus amounts to a fundamentally anti-realist sort of conventionalism (that licenses, as it were, a *cittamātra* or "mind-only" interpretation of Madhyamaka!). This will, I think, become abundantly clear from how Candrakīrti tells us he we should understand the category of *upādāya prajñapti*. For the present, though, I

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[100] For the latter, cf. in addition to the works addressed below, Warder 1971.

[101] And indeed, David Burton (1999) has urged that it is for this reason that, Nāgārjuna's intention notwithstanding, Madhyamaka ends up as a sort of nihilism: "If the mind's activity of conceptual construction did not occur, there would be no entities, and hence no true nature *of* entities." (1999: 68) More on Burton in due course.

[102] Cf., Paul Williams, 1998: 12-15n.13; 2000 (especially pp.150-152). This analysis grows out of Williams's earlier (1981) attention to the *dravyasat / prajñaptisat* distinction. Burton (2000: xi) acknowledges a particular debt to Williams.

[103] Hence, Paul Williams's apt characterization of Nāgārjuna's position as "*prajñaptimātra*" (2000: 150).

would simply like to note that the unexplained rendering of *prajñapti* as "concept" is unjustified even on strictly philological grounds.

The word is derived from the causative stem of *pra-√jñā*, "to know," etc. The causative form (*prajñapayati*) thus means "to *cause* to know," i.e., to show, inform, indicate, etc. *Prajñapti*, then, simply denotes whatever causes one to know something, whatever informs us or brings something to our attention. Mental artifacts such as concepts or designations are thus, to be sure, examples of *prajñaptayaḥ*. It need not be the case, however, that *only* such mental artifacts qualify; for surely there are other sorts of phenomena that also "inform" us of things, that direct our attention to something. Consider, for example, a case of what Paul Grice has referred to as "natural meaning": "Those spots mean measles," or "Those spots didn't mean anything to me, but to the doctor they meant measles."[104] As Grice explains, "I cannot argue from 'Those spots mean (meant) measles' to any conclusion about 'what is (was) meant by those spots'.... I cannot argue from 'Those spots meant measles' to any conclusion to the effect that somebody or other meant by those spots so-and-so." And yet, as Grice argues, such examples clearly have some relation to what we typically mean (!) when, say, we attribute intentions to speakers. Thus, as he says in concluding his discussion of the phenomenon of meaning, "surely to show that the criteria for judging linguistic intentions are very like the criteria for judging nonlinguistic intentions is to show that linguistic intentions are very like nonlinguistic intentions."[105] So, too, I suggest, for the case of *prajñapti*: insofar as mental artifacts such as concepts can "inform" us of things in something like the same way as "natural" phenomena can, mental artifacts can be seen simply as examples of the same *kind* of phenomena. This, then, is the point of my decision to render *prajñapti* as "indication"; for *indication* is neutral with respect to what

[104] Grice 1989: 213-14.

[105] *Ibid.*, p.223.

sort of thing it is that "informs" (*prajñapayati*) us of anything, with both linguistic artifacts and "natural" phenomena possibly serving to "indicate" something to me.

Something like the same point is made by Richard Hayes, the title of whose study of Dignāga (*Dignaga on the Interpretation of Signs*) reflects Hayes's emphasis on Dignāga as having treated the philosophy of language as simply a subset of the issue of inference, in general. That is, Hayes's title reflects his attention to Dignāga's treatment of both the interpretation of "natural signs" and of "conventional signs," with Dignāga having "explicitly regarded the interpretation of deliberately contrived symbols as no more than a special application of the principles of inference in general."[106] Interestingly, Hayes's attention to the category of *vijñapti* also makes a point similar to the one I have here ventured vis-à-vis *prajñapti*. Hayes's concern is to challenge the widely held view that *vijñaptimātratā* (the fact of there "being nothing but *vijñaptis*"), as that view is espoused by Vasubandhu and Dignāga, is best characterized as metaphysical idealism. Hayes thus follows Bruce Cameron Hall in suggesting that *vijñapti* is best understood not as "thought" or "idea," but simply as "phenomenon" or "sense-datum" – renderings that capture what Hayes sees as Vasubandhu and Dignāga's advisedly neutral stance with regard to the question of what, in fact, finally exists in the world. In this way, Hayes's philological attention to the word *vijñapti* helps advance his case for the characterization of Vasubandhu and Dignāga as epistemological "phenomenalists."[107]

Interestingly, the context for this more nuanced attention to the word *vijñapti* can usefully introduce the point I will finally be making about Candrakīrti's understanding of *upādāya prajñapti*. Thus, while Hayes has urged that *vijñaptimātratā* is best understood

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[106] Hayes 1988: 1.

[107] Cf., Chapter 2, n.27, for Hayes's characterization of Vasubandhu and Dignāga as "phenomenalists." (In his attention specifically to the word *vijñapti* as part of his case for that characterization, Hayes follows Hall 1986.) Given Hayes's appropriate attention to the term *vijñapti*, it is rather surprising that his own interpretation of the Mādhyamika usage of *prajñapti* nevertheless reflects the same problem he has countered with respect to the case of *vijñapti*; cf., n.137, below.

as a sense-datum theory and not as metaphysical idealism, it is nevertheless the case that such a view makes an essentially Kantian point: we can only know things *as they appear* to us (i.e., in the form of *vijñaptayaḥ*), and never as they are in themselves.[108] Even on Hayes's phenomenalist reconstruction of *vijñaptimātratā*, then, there remains in play a significant distinction between "appearance" and "reality."[109] In contrast, while on my reading of Candrakīrti it would remain apt to characterize Madhyamaka (as Paul Williams has) as "*prajñaptimātratā*" (the fact of there "being nothing but *prajñaptayaḥ*"),[110] the crucial point will be that a strong appearance/reality distinction is precisely what is refused. It is with the goal of advancing this conclusion, then, that I render *upādāya prajñapti* not as "dependent designation" or "concept," but as *relative indication*.

By thus rendering the term *prajñapti*, I do not mean to obscure the fact that it typically picks out eminently epistemic notions, or that "concepts" or "designations" are chief among the things so identified; I simply wish to avoid a translation (such as "concept") which, before we have seen what Candrakīrti tells us about the term, stacks

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[108] That Vasubandhu and Dignāga would, even on the reading of them as phenomenalists, thus be making a Kantian point helps explain why there continues to be such controversy over whether they are best understood as "phenomenalists" or as idealists; for a similar controversy has long attended Kant, too, and almost inevitably follows from Kant's way of making the point. Thus, if all we can ever *know* is things as they appear to us, then it is a small step to the claim that *that is all there is to be known*. It is not a coincidence, then, that representationalist or phenomenalist epistemologies so often shade into idealism, and that there is frequently exegetical dispute over which of these two claims is being made.

[109] It is an interesting question whether there is, on this view, anything in Vasubandhu or Dignāga that might correspond to Kant's *Ding-an-sich* as the cipher that secures the status of necessarily unknowable reality as nevertheless *real*. On Sthiramati's reading, it seems clear that this is precisely the point where the *vijñaptimātratā* position clearly becomes an *idealist* one; for Sthiramati's view is clearly that the only thing that can be admitted as existing "in itself" is *vijñāna*, "awareness." Thus, Sthiramati's commentary to Vasubandhu's *Triṃśikā* quite clearly frames Vasubandhu's project as particularly opposed to Madhyamaka, saying that "this treatise is undertaken in order to refute the extremists who say that not only knowables, but also awareness itself exists only conventionally and not ultimately" (Lévi 1925: 15: *vijñeyavad vijñānam api saṃvṛtita eva na paramārthata ity ... apy ekāntavādasya pratiṣedārthaḥ prakaraṇārambaḥ*). Against this, Vasubandhu urges (on Sthiramati's reading) that "no knowables actually exist, because of their being only imagined by nature, while awareness, because of its being dependently originated, is to be accepted as existing substantially" (*Ibid.*: 16: *evaṃ ca sarvaṃ vijñeyaṃ parikalpitasvabhāvatvād vastuto na vidyate, vijñānaṃ punaḥ pratītyasamutpannatvād dravyato 'stity abhyupeyaṃ*). Cf., n.79, above.

[110] Cf., n.103, above.

the deck in favor of an exclusively mental (a "*cittamātra*") reading of his claim. This is particularly important since, I suggest, what Candrakīrti will tell us is that our conventions represent a phenomenon of the same order as dependently originated existents, so that *both* kinds of phenomena similarly exemplify the ontological point that constitutes Candrakīrti's metaphysical claim. At the very least, then, we would do well to heed the caution of Paul Williams, who observes that "The word *prajñapti* as a technical term in Buddhist thought does not have the meaning of simple pragmatic value contrasted with objective or epistemic truth."[111]

Having thus cleared the way for the possibility that the category of *upādāya prajñapti* is more complex than is often understood, let us see what Candrakīrti tells us about how we are to understand this. The section of the *Madhyamakāvatāra* to which I take us to have been referred follows up on Candrakīrti's sevenfold analysis of the possible relations between a chariot and its parts.[112] Having rejected all seven possible accounts of this relation, Candrakīrti proceeds to ask what we are left with. What we are left with, of course, is simply the *conventional* existence of chariots (and persons, etc.). According Candrakīrti,

> If one searches in these seven ways, by the system [which is elaborated in the verse which begins] 'It is not accepted that a chariot is different from its parts' [i.e., *Madhyamkāvatāra* 6.151], a chariot will not be established either ultimately or conventionally[113]; nevertheless, in this case, abandoning analysis, from the

[111] Williams 1991: 207. This remark comes in the context of a critique of the interpretation of Madhyamaka influentially advanced by C. W. Huntington (1989).

[112] Thus, a chariot could conceivably be *different* from its parts; *identical* to them; in *possession* of them; *in* them; they in *it*; a *composition* of its parts; or in the *shape* of the parts. And of course, it is Candrakīrti's point to show that *none* of these relations can be conceived coherently. See La Vallée Poussin's edition, pp.271-2; and Huntington, p.176. For a very good discussion of this section, see Kapstein 2001: 100-102. See also Wilson 1980.

[113] Candrakīrti can make the surprising claim that the self is not even *conventionally* established in this case because, if one is searching by way of this sevenfold analysis, then one is *ipso facto* performing the kind of analytical operation which is definitively characteristic of the non-conventional. That is, searching in this way is precisely what *defines* the search for ultimate truth, and the conventional is only allowed to stand when there is no such analysis. It is important to note, though, that Candrakīrti's project perhaps runs into problems to the extent that he thus defines "conventional" as equivalent to "lacking in critical analysis." If one were to press a critique of Candrakīrti, this point would, it seems to me, be particularly important – and indeed, it would be reasonable to characterize the debate between Candrakīrti

worldly perspective [the chariot] is indicated in relative to its parts – such as its wheels – just as [the person is indicated relative to the aggregates], such as color and so forth [i.e., *rūpa*] and feeling and so forth [i.e., *vedanā* and the rest of the subjective aggregates].[114]

The phrase I have translated by "indicated relative to its parts" renders the Tibetan expression *brten nas 'dogs pa*, which in turn translates the Sanskrit *upādāya prajñapyate*. As we have seen, the gerund *upādāya* might recommend that we translate more literally as "*having taken up* its parts, it is indicated." But that this is, on Candrakīrti's reading, essentially the same as "depending upon" or "relative to" is made clear by what immediately follows, in which he explains what makes this understanding of the proper analysis of a chariot a distinctively Mādhyamika understanding: "Therefore, *insofar as we assert relative indication simply to the extent that we assert the condition of dependent origination*, in our position there is not the consequence of annihilating worldly convention."[115] This posited equivalence between "relatively indicated" (*upādāya prajñapyate*) and "dependently originated" (*pratītyasamutpanna*) also figures prominently in Candrakīrti's *Catuḥśatakavṛtti*. There, for example, he speaks of "entities, which are always precisely lacking in any established irreducible nature, functioning

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and Bhāvaviveka (that is, between the so-called "Prāsaṅgika" and "Svātantrika" Mādhyamikas, respectively) as concerning precisely this point. That is, the "Svātantrika" critics of Candrakīrti can be seen as concerned precisely to allow for the ways in which we can still make distinctions, strictly at the conventional level, between "true" and "false" conventions. Indeed, later Svātantrikas such as Jñānagarbha and Śāntarakṣita introduced precisely such a distinction with their notion of *tathya-* and *mithyā-saṃvṛti*. On this notion, see, e.g., Eckel 1987: 54-5, 75, 111-12, 123; and Ichigō 1989: 160. As Mark Siderits once pointed out to me (personal communication), Candrakīrti's contrary notion of the conventional perhaps has much to do with his having written in a context lacking in the notion of scientific progress – a point also noted by Paul Williams (1998: 83n), who says, apropos of the conventions accepted in the world (*lokaprasiddha*), that "[w]hat the 'world' considers to be the case changes, and the change does (often) embody greater accuracy...." In this connection (and to the extent that I will be characterizing Candrakīrti as having particular affinities with "ordinary language" philosophers such as J. L. Austin), cf., section IX of Wilfrid Sellars's "Empiricism and the Philosophy of Mind" (1963: 170-174), which treats the relation between "Science and Ordinary Usage." Here, Sellars argues that his version of scientific realism is not incompatible with his general deference to ordinary language.

[114] La Vallée Poussin 1970a: 277.9-14: *"śiṅ rta raṅ gi yan lag las gzhan 'dod min" zhes bya ba la sogs pa'i tshul 'dis de rnam pa bdun du btsal ba na, don dam pa daṅ kun rdzob tu śiṅ rta 'grub par mi 'gyur mod kyi, de lta na yaṅ di ni rnam par dpyad pa spangs te sngon po la sogs pa daṅ tshor ba la sogs pa ltar 'jig rten nyid las 'phang lo la sogs pa yan lag rnams la brten nas 'dogs pa yin no.*

[115] *Ibid.*: 277.14-17: *de'i phyir, rten ciṅ 'brel par 'byuṅ ba rkyen nyid 'di pa tsam khas blangs pa ltar brten nas brtags pa khas blangs pa'i phyir, kho bo cag gi phyogs la 'jig rten gyi tha snyad chad par thal bar mi 'gyur....*

deceptively as a self, for foolish persons, *having depended or having appropriated....*"[116] Here, then, he specifically adduces the gerunds *pratītya* and *upādāya* as precisely synonymous. Again, he speaks of the mind and so forth being "dependently originated, or relatively indicated"[117]; and he chastises the Buddhist epistemologists for abandoning "the excellent path known as dependent origination and relative indication."[118]

The same equivalence is reflected in the convention among Tibetan translators, which was to render both *upādāya* and *pratītya* with forms of the same verbal root, *rten*, "to support."[119] That they did so suggests that there is precedent in the Indian Buddhist tradition for the assimilation of these two terms. And indeed there is. In chapter nine of his *Abhidharmakośabhāṣyam*, Vasubandhu canvasses the different possible understandings of *upādāya*, in order to show that the Vātsīputrīyas (i.e., his opponents in chapter nine, to whom he attributes the *pudgalavāda* doctrine which is anathema for mainstream Buddhists) cannot advance their agenda by way of a special interpretation of it. Matthew Kapstein has succinctly expressed Vasubandhu's statement of what he thus took to be the two options:

> [Vasubandhu] assumes here two significant senses in which the term is used: an epistemic sense, where it refers to the relation holding between a conceptual construct and the aggregate of primitives to which it corresponds, and which I

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[116] Sanskrit in Tillemans 1990, vol.2: 41: *sarvathāsiddhasvalakṣaṇā eva padārthā mūrkhajanasya visaṃvādakenātmanā pratītya vopādāya vā varamānā....*

[117] Sanskrit no longer extant; Tibetan in Tillemans 1990, vol.2: 63: *'byuṅ ba chen po bzhin du rten ciṅ 'brel par 'byuṅ ba 'am brten nas btags par ci ste....*

[118] Tibetan in Tillemans 1990, vol. 2: 67: *...rten ciṅ 'brel par 'byuṅ ba daṅ brten nas btags pa zhes bya ba lam bzang po spangs nas mu stegs can....* The context for these remarks is that section of *Catuḥśatakavṛtti* XIII in which Candrakīrti refutes the understanding of *pratyakṣa* which is held by the Buddhist epistemologists. (Cf., Tillemans 1990, vol.1: 176-8.) The section of the *Prasannapadā* with which this section has the closest similarities (i.e., 69.13-75.5) is the section we will be considering next, immediately following our attention to *upādāya prajñapti*. Here in the *Catuḥśatakavṛtti*, Candrakīrti refers to his *pūrvapakṣin* as a "*rtog ge ba*" (Skt., *tārkika*), "logician." This remark concludes a discussion of how best to etymologize *pratyakṣa*, and it is clear from this discussion (which closely parallels *Prasannapadā* 69.13-75.5, considered below) that it is specifically the Buddhist logicians whom Candrakīrti has in mind.

[119] Cf., Das 1902: 536-537; note that Das attests many non-technical uses of the gerund *rten nas* (=Skt. *upādāya*) as having the same sense it has in rendering the technical expression *upādāya prajñapti*.

> translate ... as 'objectively directed upon' (*ālambya*) and a causal sense, [to be] rendered ... as 'causally founded upon' (*pratītya*). If the first is the sense ... intended, then the bundles are the actual objects of intentional attitudes in which the person is represented as a conceptual construct, in just the same way that the object of an intentional attitude in which milk is represented is, according to the Abhidharmists' theory, a certain sort of aggregate of atoms and real properties. And precisely the same conclusion follows from the supposition that the dependency relationship is here a causal one, for then the conceptual construct of the person is somehow caused by the bundles, but the causal chain thus posited need not include any *thing* corresponding to the person, only bundles and constructs. Either interpretation, therefore, is consistent with an affirmation of the mainstream scholastic position.[120]

If the assimilation of *upādāya* to *pratītya* is, in this way, an already attested move in the Buddhist scholastic tradition, then what exactly is new in Candrakīrti's claim here? Candrakīrti, for one, clearly thinks that his reading of the issue is most significant for its not "annihilating worldly convention." That is, he thinks that the fact of asserting relative indication "simply insofar as we assert the condition of dependent origination" alone makes possible an appropriate recovery of the "conventional." How could this be so? In order to see, let us continue with his presentation of *upādāya prajñapti* in the *Madhyamakāvatārabhāṣya*, where the terms of analysis quickly become familiar as those of the section of the *Prasannapadā* we have so far studied. Thus, according to Candrakīrti, "In the same way [as with a chariot], according to what is well known in the

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[120] Kapstein 1987: 99-100. Cf., also, Warder 1971: 190, which mentions the same observation from Buddhaghosa's commentary on the *Kathāvatthu*. The text referred to by Kapstein is at Pradhan 1975: 461: *kim idam upādāya-iti. yady ayam arthaḥ skandhānāṃ lakṣyate teṣv eva pudgalaprajñaptiḥ prāpnoti, yathā rūpādīn ālambya teṣv eva kṣīraprajñaptiḥ, atha-ayam arthaḥ skandhān pratīya-iti, skandhānāṃ pudgalaprajñaptikāraṇatvāt, sa eva doṣaḥ*: "What is [the meaning of] '*upādāya*' here? If the meaning predicated of the *skandhas* is that the construct 'person' obtains (*prāpnoti*) only when they are present (*teṣv eva*), in the same way that there is the construct 'milk' only having *intended* (*ālambya*) things like its form, then the meaning is *having depended* (*pratītya*), because the *skandhas* would be the *cause* of the construct 'person.' This is the problem [with your position]." (The context for thus charging that there is a "problem" here is that of a disagreement with the so-called *pudgalavādins*, who wish to affirm that the person is *not* entirely reducible to the *skandhas*; and Vasubandhu has effectively urged that, given *either* acceptable sense of *upādāya*, the *pudgalavāda* thesis founders. For an alternative translation of this passage, cf., Kapstein 2001: 351.)

Another interesting gloss on *upādāya* is to be found in Asaṅga's *Abhidharmasamuccaya*, which frequently uses the word in a way that Rahula (1980) appropriately renders "en raison de" (e.g., Rahula 1980: 17, 174). At one point, Asaṅga's text gives: *ekadeśāśrayībhāvārtha upādāyārthaḥ* (Gokhale 1947: 31: "the meaning of *upādāya* is that of depending on one part").

world, the self is accepted as the appropriator, having appropriated the aggregates, the dhātus, and the six āyatanas."[121] He elaborates:

> For example, relative to the wheels and so forth, it is indicated as a chariot; and in this chariot, the wheels and so forth are the appropriated substratum (*nye bar len pa*, =Skt. *upādāna*), and the chariot is the appropriator (*nye bar len pa po*, =Skt. *upādātṛ*). In the same way, *since worldly conventions are not to be totally annihilated, the self is, in terms of conventional truth, accepted as the appropriator, just like the chariot.* The five aggregates, the six dhātus, and the six āyatanas are the self's appropriated substratum. Since there is designation as self dependent upon the aggregates and so forth, just as the wheels and so forth are the appropriated substratum of a chariot, in the same way, the aggregates and so forth are to be called the self's appropriated substratum. Just as this which consists of appropriated substratum and appropriator is established as a worldly convention, in the same way, the establishment of its action and agent is to be accepted as in the case of a chariot.[122]

Particular as is suggested by the parts I have emphasized, then, Candrakīrti clearly thinks that this reading is required *insofar as worldly conventions are not to be totally annihilated*. But why should recognition of the "self" as the "appropriator" of the aggregates uniquely prevent the annihilation of worldly conventions? I suggest that for Candrakīrti, this move alone allows the definitively Buddhist project of reductionism to proceed with respect to the self, without that project's becoming an *eliminativist* one.[123]

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[121] *Madhyamakāvatāra* 162a-c (La Vallée Poussin 1970a: 281.10-12): *de bzhin 'jig rten grags pas phung po daṅ, khams daṅ de bzhin skye mched drug brten nas* (=Sanskrit *upādāya*), *bdag kyang nye bar len po* (=Sanskrit *upādātṛ*) *nyid du 'dod.*

[122] *Ibid.*: 281.13-282.282.5: *ji ltar 'phang lo la sogs pa dag la brten nas śiṅ rtar 'dogs śiṅ der 'phang lo la sogs pa dag nye bar len pa yin la śiṅ rta nye bar len pa po yin pa, de bzhin du, bdag kyang kun rdzob kyi brten par 'jig rten gyi tha snyad kun tu mi bcad par bya ba'i phyir, śiṅ rta ltar nye bar len pa por 'dod pa yin no. phung po lnga po daṅ khams drug daṅ skye mched drug ni bdag de'i nye bar len pa ste, phung po la sogs pa rnams la brten nas bdag tu brtags pa'i phyir ro, ji ltar 'phang lo la sogs pa dag śiṅ rta'i nye bar len pa yin pa, de bzhin du phung lo la sogs pa rnams kyang bdag gi nye bar len pa'o zhes bya'o. ji ltar nye bar len pa daṅ nye bar len pa po'i rnam par bzhag pa 'di 'jig rten gyi tha snyad du rnam par bzhag pa, de bzhin du 'di'i las daṅ byed pa po'i rnam par bzhag pa yaṅ śiṅ rta ltar khas blangs par bya'o.* Cf., *Catuḥśatakavṛtti* XII (Tillemans 1990, vol.2: 41): *yaḥ skandhapañcakasya-upādānākhyasya-upādātā skandhān upādāya prajñapyate....*

[123] On the importance of this distinction in the context of Buddhist analyses of the self, see Siderits 1997. Siderits is, in my opinion, completely correct in arguing that Buddhist analyses of the self are best characterized as "reductionist," but precisely *not* as "eliminativist"; and that attribution of the latter position to Buddhists rests in a serious failure to consider the importance of the "two truths" hermeneutic in Buddhism. Note, though, that Siderits's article makes this argument chiefly with respect to Ābhidhārmika Buddhism; and in the case of that tradition, Candrakīrti argues, the project is seriously compromised by the belief that critical analysis leaves a really existent remainder, so that it is *precisely* the Ābhidharmika account which becomes eliminativist.

For a Mādhyamika such as Candrakīrti, this is a particularly difficult balancing act to execute, in that, contra the Ābhidhārmikas, Candrakīrti wants to press not only the selflessness of persons (*pudgalanairātmya*), but also the fact that *things* (e.g., "aggregates") are similarly without essence (*dharmanairātmya*). Candrakīrti's radical point, though, is that the Ābhidhārmika approach is not *sufficiently* "reductionist," insofar as their willingness to leave a *dravyasat* remainder (in the form of *dharmas*, etc.) amounts, for Candrakīrti, to a failure to see that both persons *and* "things" are without essence (i.e., that both *pudgala-* and *dharma-nairātmya* obtain). More importantly, Candrakīrti's view is that the Ābhidharmika approach effectively *replaces* persons with the analytic categories (such as *dharmas*) which are, for Ābhidharmikas, what "really" exist. Thus, Candrakīrti's point is that his account of "relative indication" on one hand represents the most consistent prosecution of Buddhist reductionism; while at the same time, his account alone makes possible a recovery of the conventional, with the Ābhidhārmikas' *dravyasat* remainder, ironically, opening the door for the kind of nihilistic understanding of emptiness which Candrakīrti considers anathema. Thus, he says: "When it is completely based on relative indication, the self is not at all a support for fancies such as permanent or impermanent. Hence, fancies such as permanent and impermanent are easily refuted."[124] He explains: "Because it is not a real existent, this (i.e., the self) is not permanent, nor is it impermanent; it is not produced nor destroyed; in it there is no real permanence and so forth, nor identity nor difference."[125]

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[124] La Vallée Poussin 1970a: 282.9-12: *brten nas gdags pa la yaṅ dag par brten pa na, bdag rnam pa thams cad du brtan pa daṅ mi brtan pa la sogs pa'i rtog pa'i brten ma yin pa nyid pas, rtag pa daṅ mi rtag pa la sogs pa'i rtog pa zlog pa sla bar 'gyur ro.*

[125] *Madhyamakāvatāra* 6.163 (La Vallée Poussin 1970a: 282.14-17): *dngos yod min phyir 'di ni brtan min zhing, mi brtan nyid min 'di ni skye 'jig min, 'di la rtag pa nyid la sogs pa yaṅ, yod min de nyid daṅ ni gzhan nyid med.* Cf., also, *MMK* 18.10 (La Vallée Poussin 1970b: 375: *pratītya yad yad bhavati na hi tāvat tad eva tat, Na ca-anyad api tat tasmān na-ucchinnaṃ nāpi śāśvataṃ*), together with Candrakīrti's commentary thereon.

The self does not have permanence, of course, because it lacks *svabhāva* – it lacks, that is, the kind of "essence" in virtue of which it could exist independently of the world of manifestly changing entities, and instead exists precisely as *dependent upon* such other entities. But it also lacks *im*permanence, and this for exactly the same reason; for the impossibility of reducing the self to *any* really existent essence (*svabhāva*) – which is, on Candrakīrti's view, precisely what the analytic categories of the Ābhidharmikas are allowed to retain – means that the characteristically Buddhist *refutation* of the self cannot be understood as effectively *replacing* the conventional self with something else which alone is credited with fuller, "real" existence; "therefore, it is also not reasonable (to assert that) this [self] is impermanent."[126] In this regard, Candrakīrti introduces a compellingly apt sūtra quotation: "If there were substantially existent things, they would be counted as thoroughly perishable; [but] non-existent things do not perish; hence, they are not said to be perishable."[127]

Here, of course, "substantially existent things" (Tib., *rdzas yod*) translates *dravyasat*, and the point is clear: If, as the Ābhidhārmikas urge, there were anything which was *dravyasat*, it is precisely in that case, ironically, that the conventional understanding of persons as more or less enduring ethical agents would be undercut; for, says Candrakīrti, if the cardinal Buddhist doctrine of impermanence were predicated of *really existent* entities, that would be precisely an instance of "annihilation." If, on the other hand, there is nothing which is fundamentally existent (nothing *dravyasat*) in the

[126] La Vallée Poussin 1970a: 283.15: *de'i phyir 'di ni mi brtan pa nyid du yaṅ mi 'thad do.*

[127] *Ibid.*: 285.17-20: *gal te de dag rdzas yod na, de dag yongs su zad 'gyur graṅ, med pa de dag mi zad de, de phyir de dag zad med gsungs.* The same point is also made (at *Madhyamakāvatāra* 6.34) specifically with respect to the Epistemologists' category of *svalakṣaṇa*: "If [an entity exists] in dependence on a *svalakṣaṇa*, then through negation of that the entity would be destroyed, and emptiness would be the cause of its destruction. [i.e., if "emptiness" were taken as negating really existent *svalakṣaṇas*, then it would be a nihilistic doctrine] This is not the case, however, because entities do no [intrinsically] exist" (La Vallée Poussin 1970a: 117: *gal te rang gi mtshan nyid brten 'gyur na / de la skur pas dngos po 'jig pa'i phyir / stong nyid dngos po 'jig pa'i rgyur 'gyur na / de ni rigs med de phyir dngos yod min*). Here, I have followed the translation of Huntington (1989: 161).

first place, then it becomes uniquely possible to say, with respect to the self, that it has precisely and only the same sort of "existence" which anything *could* have – that is, that it is *dependently* or *relatively* existent. And when, in this way, relative "indication" is no different from dependent "origination," then it is possible to allow that, insofar as the "self" is a relative indication, among the things it depends upon is *the relative existence of the self.*

This, finally, is the point in Candrakīrti's having urged, in our section of the *Prasannapadā*, that the self, conventionally speaking, "has existence relative to the aggregates" (*lokasaṃvṛtyā skandhān upādāya-asya-astitvaṃ*).[128] The aggregates are, in other words, the "appropriated substratum" (*upādāna*), they are something "out there" in the world relative to which we experience ourselves *as selves*. And if, in the ultimate analysis, the *skandhas* do not finally withstand critical scrutiny any more than the self does, the point in thus concluding that they, in turn, are only "relatively" or "conventionally" existent is not to credit them with something less than full-blooded existence; rather, insofar as relative existence is the only kind of existence anything *can* have, it is simply to say that the *skandhas* must remain part of the account, though they do not constitute bedrock any more than the self.

And just as the *skandhas* must remain in play as the *upādāna* part of the relationship of existing "relatively" (*upādāya*), so, too, for Candrakīrti to allow that the self is, conventionally, the "appropriator" (*upādātṛ*) of the aggregates is thereby to say that *the self cannot be finally eliminated from the account, either*. That is, insofar as the analytic categories to which the self can be reduced are no more "really" existent than the self is, these analytic categories only make sense (i.e., as *upādāna*, "what is appropriated") *relative to* (the relatively real) self, which remains in play as their *upādātṛ*.

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[128] Cf., again, Appendix II, nn.41, 45.

For Candrakīrti, in other words, all that is finally real is the fact of *relationship* – that is, the abstract state of affairs of there being no existents that are not "dependently originated"[129] or "relatively indicated." With his emphasis on the parts of the relationship of existing "relatively" (*upādāya*), then, what Candrakīrti is now telling us is that *no part of that relationship can be held to have privileged status* – all the elements of the relationship (*upādāna, upādātṛ*, etc.) are at once equally relative, and equally indispensable, which means that none can be taken as the one thing that "really" exists.

This interpretation can, it seems to me, account for what might still seem problematic about Candrakīrti's ringing of the changes on *upa-ā-√dā*. Recall that the excursus on this that occurs in the *Madhyamakāvatāra* is preceded by Candrakīrti's dismissal (in *Madhyamakāvatāra* 6.151) of seven possible ways to see a chariot and its parts as related to one another.[130] What he then proceeds to elaborate under the heading of the *upādāna / upādātṛ* excursus, however, then seems to be precisely another relationship. How, then, does the *upādāna / upādātṛ* relation differ from the seven alternative relationships earlier canvassed and dismissed by Candrakīrti? While I must confess to being not altogether clear about this, it seems to me tenable to suggest that Candrakīrti understands the other kinds of relationships he considers to be conceived in essentially *static* terms; the *upādāna / upādātṛ* relation, in contrast, is represented as a *process*, its ongoing and dynamic character reflected in the centrality of the gerund *upādāya*, which perhaps connotes a continuous "taking up" or "appropriation."

More speculatively, we might follow Alfred North Whitehead and characterize *upādāna* and *upādātṛ* here as relating in such a way that they "prehend" one another. In Whitehead's event-based ontology, "prehension" refers to the perspective from which any event in the universe can be characterized as *subjective*. That is, every event emerges

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[129] Cf., *MMK* 24.19a-b: *apratītyasamutpanno dharmaḥ kaścin na vidyate.....*

[130] Cf., n.112, above.

as the apex of a specific trajectory of causal "vectors." "Subject" and "object," on this view, denote simply different temporal perspectives on the same events. Thus, all events can be seen as *objects* to the extent that they are objectified as "data" for future occasions of becoming, with all past events available to us now only as objects in this sense. Considered as present moments, though, any event can be seen as a "subject" to the extent that it can be understood as dynamically "appropriating" or (as Whitehead says) "prehending" the objectified data which constitute the background for its emergence – to the extent, in other words, that any event can be regarded as representing a "perspective" on the past events that gave rise to it. Thus, "subject" and "object," on Whitehead's view, denote not irreducibly different kinds of *substances*, but simply different temporal perspectives on the same events.[131]

Clearly, such an account lends itself to Candrakīrti's language of "appropriation" (*upādāna*), and the terms of Candrakīrti's analysis are fairly easily assimilated to the three factors which, for Whitehead, constitute any instance of "prehension" (and indeed, we could fairly easy substitute "appropriation" [*upādāna*] for Whitehead's "prehension" in the following passages with no obvious change in meaning). Thus, Candrakīrti's *upādātṛ* is "the 'subject' which is prehending, namely, the actual entity in which that prehension is a concrete element"; Candrakīrti's *upādāna* would be "the 'datum' which is prehended"; and Candrakīrti's *upādāya prajñapti* represents "the 'subjective form' which is *how* that subject prehends that datum."[132] On this reading, a statue is the "appropriator" (*upādātṛ*, i.e., of the body it is conventionally understood to have) only in

[131] Cf., Whitehead 1978: 19: "Each actual entity is 'divisible' in an indefinite number of ways, and each way of 'division' yields its definite quota of prehensions. A prehension reproduces in itself the general characteristics of an actual entity: it is referent to an external world, and in this sense will be said to have a 'vector character'; it involves emotion, and purpose, and valuation, and causation. In fact, any characteristic of an actual entity is reproduced in a prehension." .... every prehension consists of three factors: (a) the 'subject' which is prehending, namely, the actual entity in which that prehension is a concrete element; (b) the 'datum' which is prehended; (c) the 'subjective form' which is *how* that subject prehends that datum."

[132] Cf., *Ibid.*, p.23.

the sense that we have agreed to take the *statue's* as the relevant perspective for our discussion, with its "appropriated" body being the *upādāna* only relative to that perspective. If appeal to Whitehead's eminently speculative philosophy and its idiosyncratic terminology gives pause, it seems to me that this tentative reconstruction nevertheless has the virtue of giving an account of how the *upādāna / upādātṛ* relation, here understood in constitutively process-oriented terms, might differ from the other kinds of relations dismissed by Candrakīrti – with particularly this emphasis on "subject" and "object" as different temporal perspectives rather than irreducibly different substances remaining faithful to what seems to me to be Candrakīrti's intention.[133]

In any event, Candrakīrti has clearly alluded to the terms of the earlier Ābhidharmika debate, and his deployment of the notion of *upādāya prajñapti* is clearly meant to advance the point that there is *nothing* that is *dravyasat*, and that things only exist as *prajñaptisat*.[134] With this, we are now in a position both to return to the original context of Candrakīrti's critique of the Epistemologist, and to show how that can be related to the explication of *Mūlamadhyamakakārikā* 24.18, which represents perhaps the most important statement of the *metaphysical* claim that, I contend, Candrakīrti takes to be definitive of Nāgārjuna's Madhyamaka. This passage is particularly significant in that most interpretations of Madhyamaka seem to center on this verse, with an interpreter's unpacking of it thus providing a useful key to his or her overall interpretation of Madhyamaka. It is, then, precisely to the extent that this passage is so often

[133] In developing this excursus, I am attempting to respond to an objection from Matthew Kapstein, who first brought to my attention the problem of Candrakīrti's retaining the *upādāna / upādātṛ* relation in light of his having rejected other possible relationships. Kapstein (personal communication) has suggested, moreover, at least one way of resolving the issue that is perhaps compatible with what I have suggested here: "the *upādātṛ* is simply the conceptual/linguistic construct of the thing – statue, Rāhu, chariot or self. Without that, chariot parts, for instance, are just a pile of things that are no longer a 'chariot.' But 'chariot' without the parts is a vacuous token. The *upādāna/upādātṛ* relationship then may be understood more phenomenologically, as indicating that the two terms in some sense intend one another – in that sense they are appropriating and appropriator." The effect of my substituting Whitehead's "prehending" for Kapstein's "intending" is, perhaps, that of making this a more clearly metaphysical point.

[134] Cf., Paul Williams's characterization of Madhyamaka as espousing a "*prajñaptimātra*" view (n.103, above).

misunderstood that, I suggest, the significance of Candrakīrti's metaphysical claim (including the fact of its *being* a metaphysical claim) has gone unappreciated.[135] The verse goes:

> *Yaḥ pratītyasamutpāda śūnyatāṃ tāṃ pracakṣmahe /*
> *Sā prajñaptir upādāya pratipat saiva madhyamā //.*[136]

In Nāgārjuna's verse, we see again the correlations that are key for Candrakīrti, i.e., between *pratītyasamutpāda* and *upādāya prajñapti*; and, most significantly, a further correlation between these and *śūnyatā*. Despite the philological and conceptual resources for understanding *upādāya prajñapti* which we have found in Candrakīrti, though, particularly the third quarter-verse of this passage seems to have been enormously vexing to previous translators, with the gerund *upādāya* apparently having given the most trouble.[137] This is particularly regrettable, since it is precisely in this quarter-verse that

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[135] It will be noted that I am here frequently switching between Candrakīrti and Nāgārjuna. This is not inappropriate; for insofar as I take Candrakīrti to be a faithful interpreter of Nāgārjuna, a misreading of Nāgārjuna will also amount to a misreading of Candrakīrti, who is (I submit) very helpful in making clear *that* these are misreadings of Nāgārjuna.

[136] The text of Nāgārjuna's *kārikā* is at La Vallée Poussin 1970b: 503. The Tibetan is, characteristically, quite close, and construes the Sanskrit in quarter verses: *rten cing 'brel bar 'byung ba gang / de ni stong pa nyid du bshad / de ni brten nas gdags pa ste / de nyid dbu ma'i lam yin no //.* In the Tibetan edition of the *Prasannapadā* that I have consulted (Sakya College 1993), the verse is at p.425

[137] Thus, in the prolix translation of Kenneth Inada (1970: 148; with Inada's parenthetical insertions), we read: "We declare that whatever is relational origination is *śūnyatā*. It is a provisional name (i.e., thought construction) for the mutuality (of being) and, indeed, it is the middle path." Inada misconstrues the gerund, and it almost seems he has read *upādāya* as a noun in the dative case; at any rate, he has made quite a stretch to his "for the mutuality (of being)." But it ought to be abundantly clear from our attention to Candrakīrti's explication of *upādāya prajñapti* that Nāgārjuna's verse *can't* be saying here that *prajñapti* is a name *for upādāya* (or, as perhaps Inada thought, for "*upāda*"); rather, *upādāya* is clearly a gerund (Tibetan, *brten nas*) which qualifies *prajñapti*. Moreover, Inada's rendering of *sā* simply as "it" ("It is a provisional name...") obscures the fact – clear from the pronoun's feminine gender – that it is precisely *śūnyatā* that is being equated with *upādāya prajñapti*.

Streng (1967: 213; again, with Streng's insertions) "The 'originating dependently' we call 'emptiness'; This apprehension, i.e., taking into account [all other things], is the understanding of the middle way." Streng sees the gerund, but appears to be unclear about its referent (and its implicit accusative). In particular, he seems not to see that *prajñapti* is, as it were, the *subject* of the gerund (hence, literally, "*prajñapti*, having depended"). Instead, he takes it as somehow in apposition ("i.e."), and has to insert a direct object ("all other things") in order to retrieve a complete dependent clause. He, too, then, appears not to see how it is that *upādāya* restricts or qualifies *prajñapti*, which, furthermore, he takes as signifying "apprehension." Thus taking *prajñapti* in a specifically cognitive sense, he unwarrantedly translates the last quarter verse as "is the *understanding* of the middle way"; in fact, though, this phrase fairly clearly makes a stronger identity: "*that* (*sā*, i.e., *śūnyatā*) *is itself* (or, "is the same as," *sā eva*) *the middle way*." That is, the point is not the (epistemic) point that *śūnyatā* as *prajñapti* is the "understanding" of the middle way, but that it *just is* the middle way.

Kalupahana (1986: 339) comes closer in some respects, but is significantly misleading in another way: "We state that whatever is dependent arising, that is emptiness. That is dependent upon convention."

Nāgārjuna makes the most novel correlation. That is, the point of this text is precisely to *correlate* "emptiness" not only with *pratītyasamutpāda*, but also with any relative "indication" thereof – and by the transitive property of identity, thus to correlate *pratītyasamutpāda* and "relative indications" thereof. Thus: "Emptiness is what we call dependent origination. That [emptiness, as] a relative indication, is itself the middle way." This is, of course, just as Candrakīrti has led us to expect; for his point was essentially that of identifying *upādāya prajñapti* with *pratītyasamutpāda*. With the further correlation of *both* of these with *śūnyatā*, we are finally in a position to appreciate Candrakīrti's view of the whole Mādhyamika project.

That project has, in my view, been misunderstood largely to the extent that this threefold correlation is misunderstood. A prominently recurrent sort of misunderstanding of this seems to me to be paradigmatically exemplified by David Burton. Burton quite rightly follows Paul Williams in understanding the passage vis-à-vis the Ābhidharmika debate regarding *dravyasat* and *prajñaptisat*: "It can be argued, therefore, that Nāgārjuna means that dependently arisen entities do not have *svabhāva* in the Abhidharma sense,

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Kalupahana correctly reads "that" as referring to *emptiness*. Further, he rightly sees *upādāya* as having the sense of "dependent" (and in this regard, rendering it as an adjective instead of a gerund is no problem insofar as the gerund seems effectively to have become a frozen form). He errs mainly in translating as though *prajñapti* were in the accusative case, when, in fact, it is in the nominative. Thus, he takes *prajñapti* as that *upon which* emptiness depends, and hence, misses the *correlation* of emptiness with *prajñapti*. That is, the point is not that emptiness *depends upon prajñapti*, but rather, that *it is a dependent prajñapti*.

Hayes (1994: 304; cf., 1988: 54) seems misled by his emphasis on the epistemic sense of *prajñapti*, and takes the third *pada* (*sā prajñaptir upādāya*) as simply glossing "emptiness," in a way which yields a tendentious translation involving wholly unwarranted insertions of "to be": "We claim that dependent origination is emptiness. *To be empty is to be a derivative idea*. That alone is the middle path." (My emphasis.)

The recent translation by Jay Garfield (1995: 69, 93, 304), it seems to me, best expresses the significance of the passage. Garfield's translation, it is important to note, is from the Tibetan translation of Nāgārjuna's Sanskrit (while those of Streng, Inada, and Kalupahana are from the original), and in this case, the Tibetan is helpful in resolving what Garfield's predecessors clearly found to be an ambiguity in the Sanskrit. For with "*brten nas*," the Tibetan construes the possibly ambiguous *upādāya* as "having depended," with the Tibetan phrase *brten nas gdags pa* effectively becoming a frozen form for "relative indication" (literally, "indication, having depended"). Thus, Garfield can translate: "Whatever is dependently co-arisen, That is explained to be emptiness. That, being a dependent designation, Is itself the middle way." (Note, though, that Garfield's rendering of *gdags pa* as "designation" effectively takes *prajñapti* as referring only to *cognitive* artifacts.) Garfield alone understands "that" to refer to "emptiness," *and* correctly sees this as being in apposition to *prajñapti* ("designation"), so that it is *emptiness*, being dependent, which is a *prajñapti*.

i.e. they are not *dravyasat*. Which is to say that they are *prajñaptisat*. (In Abhidharma terms these are the only possible categories. Whatever is not *dravyasat* must be *prajñaptisat*.)"[138] Burton retains, however, the Ābhidharmika dichotomy, holding that "even second-order *prajñaptisat* entities must finally have a *dravyasat* basis. All construction – no matter how complex – is finally based on an unconstructed reality."[139] To retain this dichotomy, however, is to miss the point entirely: these Mādhyamikas are not arguing that existents *could* have the sort of "substantial" existence sought by Ābhidarmikas, and instead just *happen* to have the merely deficient sort that is "conceptually constructed"; rather, the point is that the very idea of *svabhāva* is fundamentally incoherent, and therefore cannot *possibly* be exemplified. Burton has retained, then, precisely the presupposition that Nāgārjuna and Candrakīrti chiefly mean to call into question. The whole point, in other words, is to say that "dependently" or "relatively" is the only way that anything *could* exist. Burton not only overlooks this, however, but also gets a lot of mileage out of his unexplained rendering of *prajñapti* as "concept" or "conceptual construct."[140] As a result of these moves, Burton reads *Mūlamadhyamakakārikā* 24.18 as saying that "the dependent origination of all entities means that all entities originate *in dependence upon the mind*."[141]

There seems to me to be a structurally parallel sort of misinterpretation typically exemplified among those interpreters of Nāgārjuna who come out of East Asian traditions

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[138] Burton 1999: 4-5. It is to the extent that I consider Candrakīrti a faithful exegete of Nāgārjuna that I take Burton's (mis-)interpretation of Nāgārjuna to count also as one of Candrakīrti, and so worth discussing here. Note, too, that Burton has made extensive use of Candrakīrti in his account of Nāgārjuna.

[139] Burton 1999: 92; cf., the passage from Sthiramati, n.79, above. It is based on this presupposition that Burton (1999: 4-5) charges Nāgārjuna with unwittingly espousing nihilism: "if there is nothing unconstructed *out of which* and *by whom/which* conceptually constructed entities can be constructed, then it is impossible that these conceptually constructed entities themselves can exist."

[140] The entirely cognitive sense of this rendering is, it seems to me, similar to what is implied by Jacques May, who suggests (1959: 161, n.494) "désignation métaphorique." For further elaboration of this image, cf., May 1978 (especially pp.240-1).

[141] Burton 1999: 101; emphasis mine.

of Buddhist thought. According to the characteristically East Asian interpretation of *MMK* 24.18, the verse is to be understood not as positing strict *identities*, but rather as a dialectical progression, with particularly the second *pada* of the verse (*śūnyatāṃ tāṃ pracakṣmahe*, "we call that emptiness") understood as a nihilistic moment in the dialectic. Thus, for example, Nagao (1991: 193-4):

> in the second pada, pratītya-samutpāda has been negated and declared as śūnyatā .... The first order pratītya-samutpāda is said to be 'direct,' because it has not yet been denied and represents the ordinary worldly life that is not yet negated as śūnyatā.... This pratītya-samutpāda dies in the second pada. In spite of its death, or its negation, worldly life necessarily continues, but now it is accompanied by a kind of śūnya consciousness.... The dynamic movement from the first order pratītya-samutpāda of the first pada, to its negation (*śūnyatā*) in the second pada, and further to its revival as the second order pratītya-samutpāda (equals upādāya-prajñapti) in the third pada is the Middle Path (*madhyamā-pratipad*). It is dialectical, moving from affirmation to negation and again to affirmation.[142]

What such interpretations share with interpretations like Burton's, it seems to me, is a peculiar approach to the identities apparently posited in *MMK* 24.18. On both interpretations, that is, the posited identity is seen as going, as it were, in only one direction, such that Burton understands dependent origination to have been *reduced* to *upādāya prajñapti*, and Japanese interpreters such as Nagao understand dependent origination to have been *reduced* (in the second *pada*) to emptiness. Both kinds of interpretation thus overlook the possibility that, insofar as it is *identities* that are posited, the equivalence goes, as it were, in both directions. Thus, I am arguing that *pratītyasamutpāda* has not been "reduced to" the status of *upādāya prajñapti*, partly insofar as *upādāya prajñapti* is also posited as being *pratītyasamutpāda*. It is not, in other words, simply that dependent origination is relegated to the status of a mental construct, *but also that our mental constructs have been elevated to the status of examples of dependent origination* – examples, that is, of the only kind of existents there can be.

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[142] For some interesting philological observations on the background to this characteristically East Asian line of interpretation, see Swanson 1989: 3-16.

My point here is warranted by the fact that interpretations such as Burton's and Nagao's fly in the face of what Candrakīrti is clearly telling us about how we should understand all this. Thus, what Candrakīrti has told us about *upādāya prajñapti* is precisely that we should *not* understand its invocation at *MMK* 24.18 as dismissing *pratītyasamutpāda* as merely a mental artifact, a "concept" or "fictional construct." To read it this way is to evince what Clifford Geertz (in a different context) has aptly characterized as "a confusion, endemic in the West since Plato at least, of the imagined with the imaginary, the fictional with the false, making things out with making them up."[143] Let us, then, attend to Candrakīrti's commentary specifically on *Mūlamadhyamakakārikā* 24.18, and appreciate the extent to which he understands the threefold correlation introduced there as positing an *identity* between the three terms (an identity that, we will see, amounts to the deep identity between the two truths) – with his interpretation here advanced in terms of the same examples familiar from our foray into the *Madhyamakāvatāra*. Thus, Candrakīrti says:

> And whatever is empty of essence, that is a relative indication; that very same emptiness is established as a relative indication. A chariot is indicated relative to the parts of a chariot, such as wheels and so forth. That indication of it [i.e., of a chariot], which depends upon its parts, is without origination by way of an essence; and that which is without origination by way of an essence is emptiness. That very same emptiness, the characteristic of which is the absence of origination from an essence, is established as the middle path. For that which has no origination by way of an essence, does not have existence; and since there is [also] no *cessation* on the part what is not originated by way of its own nature, it [also] does not have *non*-existence. Hence, since it is free from the two extremes of being and non-being, emptiness – whose characteristic is non-origination by way of an essence on the part of everything – is said to be the middle path, i.e., the middle way. Therefore, *dependent origination has these specific names: emptiness, relative indication,* [*and*] *middle way.*[144]

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[143] Geertz 1988: 140.

[144] *Prasannapadā* 504.8-15: *Yā ca-iyaṃ svabhāvaśūnyatā sā prajñaptir upādāya. Saiva śūnyatā upādāya prajñaptir iti vyavasthāpyate. Cakrādiny upādāya rathāṅgāni rathaḥ prajñapyate. Tasya yā svāṅgāny upādāya prajñaptiḥ sā svabhāvena-anutpattiḥ, yā ca svabhāvena-anutpattiḥ sā śūnyatā. Saiva svabhāvānutpattilakṣaṇā śūnyatā madhyamā pratipad iti vyavasthāpyate. Yasya hi svabhāvena-anutpattis tasya-astitvābhāvaḥ, svabhāvena ca-anutpannasya vigamābhāvān na-astitvābhāva iti. Ato bhāvābhāvāntadvayarahitatvāt sarvasvabhāvānutpattilakṣaṇā śūnyatā madhyamā pratipan madhyamo mārga ity ucyate. Tad evaṃ pratītyasamutpādasyava-etā viśeṣasaṃjñāḥ śūnyatā upādāya prajñaptir madhyamā pratipad iti.* Cf., *MMK* 18.10 (n.125, above).

Just as in the *Madhyamakāvatāra*, then, Candrakīrti here too takes the point to be that it is the *identity* of these – i.e., of *pratītyasamutpāda, śūnyatā*, and *upādāya prajñapti* – that uniquely allows a proper recovery of the conventional. And such a recovery of the conventional is important since, for Candrakīrti, it is at the level of the *conventional* that we should look for the kind of personal continuity which alone makes soteriological effort possible.

The point, in other words, is that a recovery of the conventional is the only way to keep the individual *subject* of such effort in play, whereas the Ābhidhārmikas' belief that the conventional enjoys a lesser type of *existence* (i.e., *prajñaptisat* as contra *dravyasat*) is precisely what makes their project problematic. Ironically, then, Candrakīrti suggests that the Ābhidhārmika version of Buddhist reductionism, despite (or rather, *because of*) its category of *dravyasat* ("substantially existent"), is most likely to issue in the extreme of "annihilationism" (*ucchedavāda*); for if an altogether unreal self is understood to have been reduced to analytic categories which are what *really* exist, then the self has effectively been *eliminated*, and we can speak of its having been "annihilated." Against such a view, this threefold correlation is clearly the basis of Candrakīrti's (characteristically Buddhist!) claim to have discerned the genuine "middle way." The self, on this view, is not impermanent, since the self simply never *existed* – never existed, at least, *substantially* or *ultimately* (*dravyatas* or *paramārthatas*). Rather, it always existed in the only way in which anything *can* exist, i.e., dependently, derivatively, *relatively*. To say that a person exists only as a *prajñapti*, then, is no longer to say that she enjoys an inferior sort of existence which pales in comparison with what is "real"; it is precisely to say that, as a dependently originated convention, she is as "real" as anything can be, with nothing *more* "real" behind her. Moreover, to emphasize that persons are (like all existents) *relative* (*upādāya*) indications is to emphasize that *the person him- or herself must remain part of our account*, and cannot finally be eliminated.

Candrakīrti has made this point by making clear, in the *Prasannapadā* and in the *Madhyamakāvatāra*, that persons exist as dependent upon some appropriated substratum (*upādāna*) – namely, the aggregates.[145] In this way, epistemic and other "indications" (*prajñaptayaḥ*) are related to some of the more obviously ontological of Buddhist categories, and thus seen as arising partially in relation to the world. It's just that Candrakīrti has also emphasized that the ontological categories of the Ābhidharmikas, too, exist only relatively.[146] As I suggested on the Whiteheadian reading of *upādāna* and *upādātṛ* as "prehending" one another, then, the "self" and the reductive categories of the Ābhidharmikas represent something like different perspectives on the same irreducibly complex events – and insofar as it is finally only the irreducibly complex *upādāya prajñaptayaḥ* (only, to transform the Whiteheadian locution, "the 'subjective forms' which are *how* that subject [*upādātṛ*] prehends that datum [*upādāna*]") that exist, no part of that relationship can be finally eliminated.

I would like to conclude this lengthy characterization of the metaphysical claim I am attributing to Candrakīrti in more generically philosophical terms. I suggest that this reading amounts to a (relatively!) *realist* reading of Madhyamaka.[147] Thus, I would agree with Mark Siderits that the Madhyamaka of Nāgārjuna and Candrakīrti can be

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[145] Cf., the many places where we have seen Candrakīrti speak particularly of existence *skandhān upādāya* (e.g., nn.91, 122, above).

[146] Cf., n.91, above. This makes clear, *inter alia*, the problem with translations such as Kalupahana's (cf., n.137, above), which has it that it is *upon prajñapti* ("convention") that emptiness depends – when in fact, the point is being made that it is *prajñaptayaḥ* that depend on something. Similarly, we can note that Bhāvaviveka glosses Nāgārjuna's *upādāya prajñapti* as *upādānam upādāya* (*nye bar len pa dag la brten nas gdags pa*; cf., Nagao 1991: 261). Again, though, while thinkers such as Sthiramati (cf., n.79, above) have stressed *upādāna* as the "ultimately" existent "basis" of such dependence, Candrakīrti's point is that the *upādāna*, too, exists only relatively; for "it is not (the case that) there is the impossibility only of statues, and so forth, when they are investigated by reasoning. Rather, according to an argument which is going to be set forth (later on), there is no possibility of form and feelings and so forth, either; hence, their existence, too, like that of the statue, would have to be accepted as conventional."

[147] In this regard, I submit that my philosophical reading of Candrakīrti's Madhyamaka differs not only from Burton's, but also from the more nuanced reading of Mark Siderits, who has long worked at arguing that Nāgārjuna's (and Candrakīrti's) version of Madhyamaka is best characterized as a variety of "anti-realism." See, e.g., Siderits 1988, 1989.

characterized as "a kind of conventionalism"[148] – but only if we understand such a characterization in light of Candrakīrti's collapsing of *upādāya prajñapti* with *pratītyasamutpāda*. If Siderits's point is made without due attention to this move, however, then one is likely to conclude, with David Burton, that these Mādhyamikas assert that "[i]f the mind's activity of conceptual construction did not occur, there would be no entities."[149] This sounds more like a statement of the idealism of Sthiramati than like Candrakīrti's understanding.[150] Against such an idealist reading, I take the point of *MMK* 24.18 (and of Candrakīrti's more fully elaborated identification of *upādāya prajñapti* with *pratītyasamutpāda*) to be precisely that emptiness describes *both* "whatever is dependently originated" (i.e., the world!), *and* verbal conventions – and this precisely insofar as the latter are *examples of* the dependently originated. The conventional processes of indication, then, do not simply stand outside the world; they are aspects of the world itself. Language, for example, is not a system that is simply *internally* coherent and interdependent; rather, its functioning is also interdependent with *the world*.

It seems to me that such a reading is the most hermeneutically charitable one, representing the only way to rescue Madhyamaka from the kind of incoherence to which it might otherwise be thought to be subject. The potential incoherence is something like the problem which Candrakīrti's interlocutor has raised at the very beginning of our primary text (and similar, too, to the objection which Nāgārjuna addresses in the *Vigrahavyāvartanī*); i.e., that of how Candrakīrti can "truly" say that phenomena are empty (i.e., dependent, contingent, conventional), even while recognizing that that description is *itself*, in a word, conventional. But the possible incoherence here is only

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[148] Siderits 1989: 239.

[149] Cf., n.101, above.

[150] Cf., nn.79,109, above.

apparent, for it has to be remembered that "empty" or "conventional" function, in these descriptions, *ontologically.* That is, if it is said that emptiness itself is "conventional," this is *not* said with the sense of meaning *merely* conventional, as opposed to some other, fuller mode of existence (e.g., *dravyasat*); rather, since things only *can* exist dependently (relatively, conventionally), to say that emptiness is itself empty is, in fact, the *only* way to say that it is "real" at all. As Matthew Kapstein has aptly put it, "The discovery that our conventions are not *ultimately* grounded may be disconcerting for some, but for Candrakīrti this is precisely what being *conventional* means."[151]

On this reading, then, Nāgārjuna and Candrakīrti have reached the familiar (but initially baffling) conclusion concerning the "emptiness of emptiness" in a way which, with respect to a different context, has been very well expressed by Frank Farrell: "The idea is that a metaphysical account can turn into a different one, not through being opposed from without, but through our pressing it to take to their logical outcome its own internal principles."[152] I suggest, then, that just as on Farrell's reading of Donald Davidson, "the relativist position turns itself into a more realist one when we put pressure on it and demand that it display its consequences explicitly."[153] So, too, in the case of Nāgārjuna and Candrakīrti: The possibly relativist claim that all phenomena – including *this very characterization* of phenomena – are empty, thus turns itself into a more realist

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[151] Kapstein 2001: 102. While I have here made the point in terms of the *ontological* sense of Candrakīrti's understanding of words meaning "conventional," Kapstein has made what seems to me a similar point in terms of so-called "necessary" truths, noting that on the Buddhist account, "even the necessary truths of logic and mathematics, which may be known a priori, are here termed 'conventional' (Skt. *sāṅketika*, Tib. *tha snyad pa*). But 'conventional' in its Buddhist uses should not be taken to imply 'freely chosen from a given set of alternatives,' and much less 'arbitrary.' It refers, rather, to all language and propositional knowledge, and to the principles to which they conform and to their objects; for none of these is or directly points to that absolute reality whose realization is spiritual liberation. That absolute, of which not even the categories of the one and the many or of being and non-being can be affirmed, wholly transcends the familiar conventions of logic, experience, language and thought." (Kapstein 2001: 340n)

[152] Farrell 1996: 22.

[153] *Ibid.*

account. For Nāgārjuna and Candrakīrti have indeed put more pressure on their own account, and demanded that a logical consequence of an ontology of "dependent origination" is that *our accounts of things, too, must be dependent.* This results in a sort of realism because, as I have said, it compels the recognition that our accounts of things depend, among other things, *on the reality of the things described.* To be sure, the "reality" of the things described will be a *relative, dependent* reality; but, since "no phenomenon at all is found which is not dependently originated,"[154] this is the "fullest," the *only* reality we can hope to find. Thus, by insisting on the "emptiness of emptiness," Candrakīrti throws us back into the world of phenomena, and compels the recognition that, while phenomena are dependent, contingent, conventional, they are, for all that, *real.*[155] This, I suggest, is the significance of Nāgārjuna's famous conclusion that "there is, on the part of *saṃsāra*, no difference at all from *nirvāṇa*."[156] That is, the "ultimate truth" (here, *nirvāṇa*) does not consist in some essential *difference* from merely "conventional" reality (*saṃsāra*); rather, the ultimate truth is simply the fact that *there is nothing more ultimate than conventions.*

A version of "realism" thus results if we recall that *reality itself* is understood to consist in instances of "conventions"; if we recall, in other words, that *whatever is dependently originated,* being a "relative indication," is called "emptiness." I urge this as in some sense a "realist" view not only with the contrary interpretation of Siderits in mind, but also in order to recur to my point about the observations of Bruce Hall and

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[154] *Mūlamadhyamakakārikā* 24.19 (La Vallée Poussin 1970b: 505.2-3): *apratītyasamutpanno dharmaḥ kaścin na vidyate.* Note that this passage is significant vis-à-vis the whole "thesislessness" question, since it quite clearly states the strong metaphysical claim that *all phenomena are dependently originated.*

[155] Of course, the sort of "realism" thus retrieved is certainly not the sort of "metaphysical realism" which Siderits takes Nāgārjuna to oppose (cf., n.147, above). But the whole point of the Mādhyamika approach is to *refuse* distinctions such as realist/anti-realist; and I am here suggesting that what this refusal amounts to is, in effect, a sort of *relative* realism (since things only *can* be "relatively real").

[156] *MMK* 25.19: *na saṃsārasya nirvāṇāt kiṃ cid asti viśeṣaṇam.* (La Vallée Poussin 1970b: 535.2-3)

Richard Hayes with respect to the cognate term *vijñapti* (noted in the context of my first arguing that we not render *prajñapti* as "concept").[157] Thus, I urged that even if the deployment of that term by Vasubandhu and Dignāga is best understood as advancing simply a phenomenalist epistemology (rather than a project in metaphysical idealism), the very idea of sense-data nevertheless leaves in place a significant distinction between appearance and reality. Against such a supposition, we can put the metaphysical claim I am attributing to Nāgārjuna and Candrakīrti in more generically philosophical terms, and finally recur to the notion of transcendental arguments by anticipating an objection we will consider at greater length in concluding the following chapter – specifically, that transcendental arguments by their very nature lead to idealist conclusions.[158] In concluding the next chapter, I will have more to say about this; for now, suffice to say that if there is something akin to Kant in Candrakīrti's arguments, it is *not* in the sense that we have here a sharp distinction between conventional "appearance" and ultimate "reality."[159] On the contrary, it is precisely such a distinction that Candrakīrti has most significantly refused, and the logic of his collapsing of conventional and ultimate truth (of *saṃsāra* and *nirvāṇa*, of epistemology and ontology) seems to me to be well expressed in Hilary Putnam's characterization of what he calls "internal realism":

> Internal realism says that the notion of a 'thing in itself' makes no sense; and *not* because 'we cannot know the things in themselves'. This was Kant's reason, but Kant, although admitting that the notion of a thing in itself *might* be 'empty', still allowed it to possess a formal kind of sense. Internal realism says that we don't know what we are talking about when we talk about 'things in themselves'. And that means that the dichotomy between 'intrinsic' properties and properties which are not intrinsic also collapses – collapses because the 'intrinsic' properties were supposed to be just the properties things have 'in themselves'. The thing in itself and the property the thing has 'in itself' belong to the same circle of ideas, and it is time to admit that what the circle encloses is worthless territory.[160]

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[157] Cf., n.107, above.

[158] Chapter 5, n.80.

[159] Such is what influential interpreters such as Th. Stcherbatsky (1927) and T. R. V. Murti (1960) can plausibly be said to have argued with respect to Madhyamaka.

[160] Putnam 1987: 36.

There thus seems to me to be an important sense in which Candrakīrti's view might even be characterized as something like "direct" or "naive realism," provided we understand this not as a metaphysical thesis but simply as our conventional epistemic experience. Indeed, this is perhaps what is reflected in Candrakīrti's finally endorsing, contra the Buddhist Epistemologist, the standard Nyāya list of *pramāṇas* (with B. K. Matilal often having defended the kind of "direct" or "naive realism" he took to be particularly associated with Nyāya).[161] However, while (as we saw in Chapter 3) the Mīmāṃsakas upheld a version of direct realism as a matter of metaphysical principle, Candrakīrti's is held simply in deference to what people conventionally say about their epistemic practices, and with the qualification that the intuitions of direct realism do not correspond to anything that is *ultimately* the case. For Candrakīrti, the properly metaphysical thesis is that, while our conventions are in important senses erroneous, it is nevertheless the case that *there is nothing more real than our conventions*. If *vijñaptivādins* such as Vasubandhu and Dignāga thus advance the sort of phenomenalist epistemology that retains a strong appearance/reality distinction, then, Candrakīrti instead says that while we may only know things as they appear to us, *that's all there is to them.*

To say that "how they appear to us" is all there is to them, however, is not to say that the *appearance-to-us* is *itself* all there is – only that there is nothing *more* real *behind* appearances. As Candrakīrti stresses, though, there remains nevertheless some *upādāna* which is "appropriated" by the subject as *upādātṛ*. It's just that this, too, exists only relative to the fluid and dynamic relationship that Candrakīrti finally characterizes as that of *upādāya prajñaptayaḥ*. The point, in other words, is that the Ābhidharmikas' candidates for the "more real" entities underlying conventions (*dharmas, skandhas, svalakṣaṇas*), too, exist in the only way that anything *can* exist – viz., as themselves

[161] On Matilal's characterization, cf., Chapter 3, n.168; for Candrakīrti's endorsement of the Nyāya *pramāṇas*, see, again, Appendix II, n.83, 85.

dependently originated. Thus, I would concur with Siderits that it is indeed apt to characterize this version of Madhyamaka as a sort of "conventionalism" (or, we might say, *prajñapti*-ism); but only if, with respect to conventions/*prajñaptis*, we again follow Frank Farrell:

> To discover that getting the logical structure of a language right requires a commitment to individuals or events or times is to discover something about the world itself; it is not just to find our way about within the confines of our language. What appears in the overall character of our linguistic system and of our system of beliefs is, at least very roughly, the self-display of the world .... Just by using language, we all count as talking about roughly the same world of things, a world that has from the start, before all the detailed specifying we undertake, impressed itself on any language to make it meaningful.[162]

So, too, for Candrakīrti: to discover that there is nothing but *prajñaptayaḥ* is not simply to "find our way about within the confines of our language" (or anything else that we take as "indications"), but is, rather, *to discover something about the world itself.* And, for Candrakīrti, it is to discover *the most important thing* about the world; that is, that there is nothing more "real" than the world as we experience it, nothing more "real" than the "indications" (*prajñaptayaḥ*) that exemplify the process of dependent origination. Or, to return to the context of Candrakīrti's critique of epistemology: properly to understand the ontological claims of the Mādhyamika approach is already precisely to understand that our epistemic practices can only *exemplify* the nature of things; they cannot provide an independent perspective *on* the nature of things.

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[162] Farrell 1996: 79.

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MĪMĀṂSAKAS AND MĀDHYAMIKAS AGAINST THE BUDDHIST EPISTEMOLOGISTS: A COMPARATIVE STUDY OF TWO INDIAN ANSWERS TO THE QUESTION OF JUSTIFICATION

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CHAPTER 5
The Transcendental Argument Completed: Candrakīrti's Critique of Buddhist Epistemology, Part 2: *Pratyakṣa*

5.i. Introduction: On the soteriological value of the conventional

Having considered, in the preceding chapter, Candrakīrti's critique of the Buddhist Epistemologist's understanding of *svalakṣaṇas*, we have learned that the whole issue of *svalakṣaṇas* can be (and, according to the Tibetan translation of the *Prasannapadā*, *is*) framed for Candrakīrti in terms of the notion of *upādāya prajñapti*, which in turn figures prominently in some of Candrakīrti's characteristic arguments regarding how we are to understand the Buddhist analysis of existents such as the self as "empty." What the foregoing discussion has chiefly given us, I would suggest, is an appreciation of precisely why Candrakīrti's vision of the Buddhist project is such as to *require* that he refuse the Epistemologist's demands for *a posteriori* justification, and instead advance his own understanding in terms of the kind of transcendental arguments which show those very demands to be self-refuting. Thus, my attention to *upādāya prajñapti* (and all that that entails) has, again, been meant to elaborate the metaphysical claim that I am attributing to Candrakīrti: *there is nothing more real than our conventions*, insofar as *conventionally* – which is the same as to say *dependently* – is the only way that anything *can* exist.

This is, we are now in a better position to appreciate, a metaphysical claim which is inherently such that it *cannot* be justified in terms of the Buddhist Epistemologist's philosophical approach; for, as Candrakīrti sees it, the Epistemologist's peculiarly technical usage of conventional categories *just is* an attempt to get at something more

"real" behind our conventions. This is evident in the fact that the Epistemologist's sense of *svalakṣaṇa* cannot accommodate conventional uses of the word, and in the contention that *svalakṣaṇas* are understood as the remainder of the kind of "critical analysis" (*vicāra*) which, for Candrakīrti, is itself definitive of the search for ultimate truth. From Candrakīrti's perspective, then, his interlocutor's particular demand for justification is evidence of what is precisely the problem to be overcome – indeed, as Candrakīrti sees it, the Epistemologist's own statement of his demand is self-refuting, insofar as he can only *make* the statement by presupposing the conventional senses of words, making it incoherent at the same time to call for their replacement by peculiarly technical senses. Accordingly, Candrakīrti attempts to circumvent the normativist justificatory skeptic's challenge (i.e., the objection that Candrakīrti's position is *unjustified*, insofar as it cannot be warranted by any of the belief-forming practices that the Epistemologist admits as reliable) by way of a transcendental argument – one to the effect that *the Epistemologist's own demand for justification itself presupposes the truth of Candrakīrti's metaphysical claim.*

All of this is made compellingly clear in a passage summarizing the first stage of the argument, before Candrakīrti turns to address the doctrine of *pratyakṣa* ("perception") which is, for the Buddhist Epistemologist, crucially correlated with the account of *svalakṣaṇas* that Candrakīrti has attacked. We saw that Candrakīrti introduced his whole engagement with this interlocutor by attributing to him the claim that he is only thematizing our conventional epistemic practices,[1] such that Candrakīrti's subsequent arguments had only to take the form of a refutation of that claim. Now, having concluded his critique of the Epistemologist's account of *svalakṣaṇas* as "bare particulars," Candrakīrti again attributes to his interlocutor the claim that he is not purporting to have developed an epistemology that yields access to ultimate truth: "What's the use of this

[1] Cf., Chapter 4, pp.194-5 (nn.50-51); and Appendix II, n.10.

hair-splitting? For we do not say that all transaction involving reliable warrants and cognizables is *true*; rather, what is familiar in the world is [all that is] established by this argument."

Candrakīrti's retort is compelling, and casts his disagreement with the Epistemologist in a specifically soteriological vein. That is, Candrakīrti here makes clear that he considers his interlocutor's approach self-contradictory specifically insofar as it does not appreciate the soteriological *value* of the conventional. Thus, the Epistemologist's substitution of peculiarly technical usage for the conventional senses of words is, for Candrakīrti, self-refuting *specifically as a Buddhist project*, to the extent that such a project, as Candrakīrti understands it, necessarily depends on the conventional. He says:

> We, too, say, What's the use of this hair-splitting, which delves into mundane communication? Leave it alone! – until there is understanding of reality, the conventional, whose reality comes into being as projected through mere error, is, for those desirous of liberation, the cause of the accumulation of the roots of merit which convey [one] to liberation. But you, by virtue of an intellect which is ignorant of the distinction between conventional and ultimate truth, having introduced some argument, senselessly (*anyāyato*) destroy it. It is I who, based on skill in settling conventional truth, having located myself in the worldly viewpoint, overturning one argument dedicated to the refutation of one part of the conventional by another argument, like an elder of the world, refute only you who are deviating from the conduct of the world; but [I do] not [refute] the conventional. Therefore, if it is everyday communication, then, as in the case of a characteristic, there must also be a subject [which possesses it], and hence, there is precisely this fault. Now [as for] ultimate truth, due to the [ultimate] unreality of subjects, the twofold characteristic [i.e., *sva-* and *sāmānyalakṣaṇa*] does not exist, either; whence, then, [your] two authoritative warrants?"[2]

This passage is striking for its expressing one way to understand how conventional and ultimate are to be related for Candrakīrti. Thus, one might again wish to find here support for the view that it is *Candrakīrti* (and not his interlocutor) who is the real "skeptic," insofar as Candrakīrti apparently disparages the conventional as something "whose reality comes into being as projected through mere error"

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[2] This exchange is at *Prasannapadā* 68.5-69.7; cf., Appendix II, n.48.

(*viparyāsamātrāsāditātmabhāvasattākā saṃvṛtir*). He goes on, though, to characterize it much more positively as nonetheless "the cause of the accumulation of the roots of merit which convey [one] to liberation" (*mokṣāvāhakakuśala mūlopacayahetur*), suggesting that there is an important sense in which the conventional is to be retained as having soteriological value.[3] If, for Candrakīrti, our conventions are in some sense compromised, then, he nevertheless stresses that they are *indispensable* – with the Epistemologist's attempt to dispense with them therefore incoherent.

That the conventional world is positively valued precisely *because* of its emptiness is the upshot of the most obviously transcendental argument made by Nāgārjuna, the twenty-fourth chapter of whose *Mūlamadhyamakakārikā* clearly argues that emptiness is to be understood precisely as a *condition of the possibility* of everything that, for a Buddhist, is to be accepted as true. The paradigm case of what is true for Buddhists is the Buddha's "Four Noble Truths" (*catvāry āryasatyāni*), an investigation of which constitutes the topic of this culminating chapter. The chapter begins with the challenge of an imagined interlocutor: "If all this is empty, then there's neither production nor destruction; it follows, for you, that the Four Noble Truths don't exist."[4] This is clearly a Buddhist interlocutor, who wants to saddle Nāgārjuna with what is, for a Buddhist, most clearly an undesired consequence; for a Buddhist, that is, the truth of the "Four Noble Truths" noncontroversially obtains, and any position that issues in a contrary conclusion is *ipso facto* problematic. Nāgārjuna rejoins that, in fact, it is only *because* everything is empty that the Four Noble Truths obtain.[5]

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[3] Cf., *MMK* 24.10 (p.494.12-13): *vyavahāram anāśritya paramārtho na deśyate / paramārtham anāgamya nirvāṇam na-adhigamyate //* ("without relying on convention, the ultimate is not taught; without having understood ultimate, nirvāṇa is not experienced").

[4] *MMK* 24.1 (p.475.4-5): *yadi śūnyam idaṃ sarvam udayo nāsti na vyayaḥ / caturṇām āryasatyānām abhāvas te prasajyate //.*

[5] *MMK* 24.20 (p.505.18-506.1): *yady aśūnyam idaṃ sarvam udayo nāsti na vyayaḥ / caturṇām āryasatyānām abhāvas te prasajyate //* ("If all this is *not* empty, there is neither production nor destruction, and it follows for *you* that the Four Noble Truths do not exist").

It is easy to imagine rephrasing this exchange in the form of a Kantian transcendental argument – i.e., one which starts by asking, "How are the Four Noble Truths possible?" That is, what is the *condition of the possibility* of the Four Noble Truths (of, for example, the arising and the cessation of suffering)? The answer is the fact of emptiness. That is, the fact that existents only come into being in mutual dependence upon one another (and are therefore "empty" of intrinsic existence) is all that makes it possible for suffering to *arise* – and, thus having *arisen* as a contingent and dependent phenomenon, to be caused to *cease*. If, in contrast, suffering were the "natural" or "essential" (*svabhāvena*) state of affairs, this would mean (by definition) that it could not be interrupted, and the cultivation of the entire Buddhist path would be pointless.[6] Thus, the very quality that defines the conventional world as "conventional" (viz., its *emptiness*) is precisely what makes it *work*.[7] It is, in a word, *better* that the world exists "conventionally" (dependently, relatively, etc.), than it would be if (*per impossible*) everything were "essential"; for the latter would be tantamount to a static world without change or development. And if (as is manifestly the case) the former state of affairs means that we suffer, it also means that something can be *done* about that.

That is why Candrakīrti can at once seemingly disparage the conventional (i.e., as a state of affairs "whose reality comes into being as projected through mere error"), and at the same time criticize his interlocutor for failing to appreciate its ultimate *value* (i.e., as "the cause of the accumulation of the roots of merit which convey one to liberation"). And it is because the conventional is thus to be *valued* that, on Candrakīrti's view, it is misguided to look for something more real behind it. That Candrakīrti thinks his

[6] So *MMK* 24.23-24 (p.507): *na nirodhaḥ svabhāvena sato duḥkhasya vidyate / svabhāvaparyavasthānān nirodhaṃ pratibādhase // svābhāvye sati mārgasya bhāvanā na-upapadyate / atha-asau bhāvyate mārgaḥ svābhāvyaṃ te na vidyate //* ("There is no cessation of suffering that exists essentially; by positing an essence, you prevent cessation. If the path is essential, cultivation doesn't stand to reason; if the path is to be cultivated, you cannot have an essence.").

[7] Cf., *MMK* 24.14 (p.500.3-4): *sarvaṃ ca yujyate tasya śūnyatā yasya yujyate / sarvaṃ na yujyate tasya śūnyaṃ yasya na yujyate //* ("Everything is possible for the one for whom emptiness obtains; nothing is possible for the one for whom emptiness does not obtain").

interlocutor *is* looking for something more real behind the conventional is what is suggested by the particular charge of incoherence he here levels at his interlocutor; for the Epistemologist's project, on Candrakīrti's reading, is self-referentially incoherent insofar as it at once *replaces* conventional terms with a putatively probative sort of discourse (*upapatti*), and at the same time senselessly (*anyāyatas*) undermines that very project by then trying to characterize it as "conventional."[8]

In this characterization of his interlocutor as having thus "senselessly destroyed" (*anyāyato nāśyati*) his own project, we find an unusually clear statement of Candrakīrti's exploitation of what I have characterized as a key rhetorical feature of transcendental arguments – that is, their urging that one cannot argue against their claims without already presupposing them (and hence, without contradicting oneself). Moreover, we here see this statement explicitly indexed to a specifically *soteriological* project. Again, then, despite his apparent disparagement of the conventional world, Candrakīrti clearly stresses that his only quarrel is with his interlocutor, not with conventions[9] – with any replacement of the latter by technical usage compromising the soteriological project that necessarily depends upon conventions. In concluding the present chapter, we will see that this casting of the argument in soteriological terms – a move we will further elaborate in due course – may represent one way of answering some of the criticisms recently directed at transcendental arguments. First, though, let us see how Candrakīrti

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[8] Cf., also, Candrakīrti's subsequent remark (Appendix II, n.49): "Now perhaps it is not accepted [by you] that the derivation (*vyutpatti*) of words thus depends on a connection between action and agent. This is extremely problematic. You transact your business (*vyavaharati*) by those very words whose sense is due to a connection between action and agent, and yet you do not acknowledge actions and instruments and so forth as the meaning[s] of words. You fool! Your sense is bound to a mere fancy."

[9] Cf., a passage from the *Saṃyutta Nikāya*, cited by Candrakīrti at *Prasannapadā* 370.6-8 (and in the *Madhyamakāvatāra* at p.179.17-20): *loko mayā sārdhaṃ vivadati, na-ahaṃ lokena sārdhaṃ vivadāmi // yal loke 'sti saṃmataṃ, tan mamāpy asti saṃmataṃ / yal loke nāsti saṃmataṃ mamāpi tan nāsti saṃmataṃ* ("The world disputes me, I do not dispute with the world; what is admitted as existing in the world, that is agreed by me, too, to exist; that which is admitted in the world as not existing, that is agreed by me, too, not to exist"). It would, of course, be difficult to reconcile this passage with Candrakīrti's Buddhist refutation of the *ātman*, which is surely thought by many in the world to exist! Again, then, cf., Appendix II, n.41.

completes his argument against the Buddhist Epistemologist by considering the latter's doctrine of perception.

5.ii. Candrakīrti on *pratyakṣa*

Turning now to the Epistemologist's account of *pratyakṣa*, Candrakīrti begins the attack with his standard *modus operandi*, again adducing a familiar expression that, he contends, cannot be accommodated on his interlocutor's view: "Moreover, because it doesn't include instances of worldly discourse such as 'a jar is perceptible' (*ghaṭaḥ pratyakṣaḥ*), and because of the acceptance of the discourse of ordinary people (*anārya*), [your] definition (*lakṣaṇa*) is too narrow; it doesn't make sense." What this usage ("a jar is perceptible") exemplifies is the fact that the same word *pratyakṣa* conventionally functions both as a noun (i.e., to designate the epistemic faculty of "perception"), and an adjective (i.e., to characterize the *objects* of perception as "perceptible"). What is at stake for Candrakīrti, then, is the idea that perception is not a unique *faculty* that affords privileged access to the "given," but an ordinary word that is also used to describe what J. L. Austin memorably characterized as "medium-sized dry goods." The ensuing argument from "derivation" (*vyutpatti*), while it might appear extremely arcane to the non-Sanskritist, is thus driving towards the conclusion that the ordinary word *pratyakṣa* also has an adjectival function – with this usage adduced to undermine Dignāga's contention that it uniquely denotes a privileged faculty.[10]

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[10] Of course, one might also take the salient point of the example "a jar is perceptible" to be that it is *jars* that are perceptible, not the Epistemologist's vanishingly small *svalakṣaṇas*. This is how Siderits (1981: 148, ff.) reads the point, and it is also how I read this passage in an earlier attempt to understand this (Arnold 2001b). This is, to be sure, as Candrakīrti would wish to argue, and it is clearly one upshot of this conventional usage. Nevertheless, it will become clear that, according to the ensuing argument from "derivation," the salient point of the example for Candrakīrti is the fact that is reflected in my rendering *pratyakṣa* here as *perceptible*, and not as *perception*. For a parallel argument, cf., chapter 13 of Candrakīrti's *Catuḥśatakavṛtti*, §15 (following the divisions of Tillemans), the Tibetan text of which is in Tillemans 1990, vol. 2: 66-67 (with Tillemans's translation in vol. 1: 178-9).

As in the discussion of *svalakṣaṇas*, Candrakīrti anticipates his interlocutor's attempt to argue that in fact the conventional usage here adduced *can* be accommodated by his account – specifically, by considering the adjectival usage a "figurative" one (a case, that is, of *upacāra*). Thus, the interlocutor suggests that a jar might be designated as "*pratyakṣa*"[11] in the same way that, according to a well-known passage from the *Dhammapada*, "the birth of buddhas is bliss."[12] The latter is a stock example of "figurative reference to an effect with respect to its cause" (*kāraṇe kāryopacāra*).[13] That is, the birth of buddhas is a *cause* of happiness for the suffering creatures of the world, so that it is really the *effect* of this event that is indicated by the expression. Similarly, Candrakīrti's interlocutor wants to argue that the conventional example adduced by Candrakīrti is one in which people designate the "effect" or output of a perceptual event (viz., a jar) in terms of the epistemic faculty (viz., *pratyakṣa*) which is its cause (with jars being "*pratyakṣa*" simply insofar as it is *pratyakṣa* that apprehends them); and in this way, the Epistemologist can retain his commitment to the view that *pratyakṣa* uniquely denotes the faculty whose sole function is to yield access to *svalakṣaṇas*.

Candrakīrti rejoins by noting that appeal to figurative usage makes sense only in certain *contexts*, and that such a context does not obtain in this case. Candrakīrti's remarks here can be related to a rich body of Sanskrit literature on the subject of poetics. According to these Sanskrit conventions, what alerts us to the fact that a figurative usage is in play, is the fact that the primary or manifest meaning (*mukhyārtha*) of an utterance is

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[11] As before when discussing *svalakṣaṇa* (cf., Chapter 4, n.76), we here have an occurrence of the word *pratyakṣa* which it is necessary to leave untranslated; for it is important to note that Candrakīrti's interlocutor is just reporting the conventional usage, but I cannot (as an English translation of that example requires) translate this as "perceptible," since that's the usage he doesn't want to allow.

[12] *Dhammapada* 14.16 (stanza 194): *sukho buddhānaṃ uppādo sukhā saddhammadesanā / sukhā saṅghassa sāmaggi samaggānaṃ tapo sukho.*

[13] The same example is cited and discussed in Vasubandhu's *Abhidharmakośabhāṣyam* (*ad Abhidharmakośa* 1.10; Pradhan 1975: 7), where it is also an example of *kāraṇe kāryopacāra*. Cf., also, *Nyāyabindu* 3.2 (and Dharmottara's commentary thereon; Shastri 1985: 85), where the case of *parārthānumāna* is similarly considered a figurative usage of the word *anumāna*.

"blocked" (or *contradicted, bādhita*) by something else in the utterance that is inconsistent with this.[14] The point of these Sanskrit theorists is, it seems to me, much like a point Paul Grice has made in the context of his discussions of "conversational implicature." Grice has argued that we must presuppose certain things about the intentions of our interlocutors if we are to stand any chance of recognizing when some implicature (e.g., irony), quite apart from the manifest *meaning* of the utterance, has been made. Thus, for example, if we presuppose (as Grice thinks we must) that our conversation partners intend to make contributions to the conversation that are "appropriate to the immediate needs at each stage of the transaction," then we are obliged to take any apparent *failure* thus to be "appropriate" as an indication that what is intended is some implicature.[15] So, too, for Candrakīrti: Insofar as it is widely held by Buddhists that birth is the cause only of *suffering*, Buddhists can be expected to realize that the primary meaning is "blocked" (or, in Grice's terms, that a "conversational maxim" has been violated) when he or she is confronted with the phrase "the birth of Buddhas is happiness." This is the kind of case in which we are entitled to (indeed, we *must*) look for some figurative sense. (Here, what is figuratively conveyed is the point that the birth of Buddhas is the *cause* of happiness *for the beings who benefit from their teachings*.)

Candrakīrti denies, however, that the phrase "a jar is perceptible" similarly requires recourse to figurative usage in order for it to make sense: "But in the present case – 'a jar is perceptible' – there is nothing at all called a jar which is imperceptible, [nothing at all] separately perceived of which perceptibility could be figuratively predicated." That is, all that would entitle us to seek a figurative usage would be a patent

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[14] See, e.g., *Kāvyaprakāśa*, 2.8, ff. (Karmarkar 1965: 39, ff.). Thus, *Kāvyaprakāśa* 2.9 states three conditions, one or more of which must be met for there to be an appeal to any kind of figurative usage, with the first one being *mukhyārthabādhe* ('when there is a contradiction with the manifest meaning"). (In the course of this chapter, one of the cases discussed is *sādhyavasānikā* [2.11], the identification of two things such that one is completely absorbed in the other – with *kāryakāraṇabhāvādi* [p.51] being a case in point.)

[15] Grice 1989: 28; cf., pp.28-31. While Grice is perhaps persuasive in this account of what is likely to have occurred in order for us to know that an "implicature" has been effected, he is probably wrong to think that similar criteria can be given from which we can be certain *what* the implicature is.

contradiction in the "manifest meaning" (*mukhyārtha*) of the expression – such as, for example, its being well known that jars are really *im*-perceptible (just as it is in fact well-known that birth is really a cause of *suffering*). This is not the case, however, and we therefore need no such recourse. Moreover, anticipating a further attempt to invoke figurative usage, Candrakīrti argues that an appeal to figurative usage that is based on its really being the *parts* of a jar that are perceived is even less promising for the Epistemologist, since that way lies Candrakīrti's characteristic point regarding how to understand the reductionist project of Buddhism:

> If it is said that perceptibility is figurative because of the non-existence of a jar apart from [perceptible qualities] like color and so forth, then [appeal to] figurative usage makes even less sense, since there is absence of a basis which is being figuratively described; for the sharpness of a donkey's horn is not spoken of [even] figuratively. Moreover, if it is imagined that a jar, which is included in worldly discourse, has [only] figurative perceptibility since it doesn't exist apart from its color and so forth, then surely, this being the case, because color and so forth, too, do not exist apart from earth and so forth, the [merely] figurative perceptibility of that color and so forth would also have to be posited.

That is, Candrakīrti will gladly concede that medium-sized objects like jars are analytically reducible – but once having opened the way for this kind of critical analysis, he will then press the point and urge that there is *no* irreducible remainder, so that analytic categories such as the "aggregates" (*skandhas*, of which "form" here is the first) must themselves be understood as reducible. The Epistemologist's attempted explanation of the adjectival use of *pratyakṣa* by appeal to figurative usage, then, cannot coherently be reconciled with his own account of the reductionist project, so that he must, once more, do violence to our conventional understanding. As Candrakīrti here puts it, his interlocutor's definition has "insufficient extension"; that is, it does not extend far enough to cover what are clearly attested usages of the word purportedly under definition – in which case, the Epistemologist's protests notwithstanding, it is no longer (what is

typically understood by) "perception" that is under explanation, but something else altogether.[16]

Candrakīrti continues to press this line of argument, again transposed into the key of the eminently Sanskritic exercise of *vyutpatti*, "derivation" or "etymology" (with his engagement specifically with etymological arguments advanced by Dignāga suggesting, again, the likely identity of his interlocutor throughout the section of the *Prasannapadā* which concerns us).[17] Throughout the course of this Sanskritic word-play, Candrakīrti's point remains that of undermining the privileged status of the Epistemologist's faculty of "perception" (*pratyakṣa*) by trivializing *pratyakṣa* as merely characterizing (i.e., as "perceptible") *any* epistemic object that gives rise to some awareness. In this way, Candrakīrti has simply continued to advance, in a characteristically Indic idiom, what we might plausibly characterize as a project in "ordinary language philosophy." When Candrakīrti concludes his characteristically Sanskritic display of virtuosity in *vyutpatti*, we again see that this principled appeal to ordinary language is deployed in the service of a transcendental argument – here, one that bears striking affinities to arguments advanced by several twentieth-century proponents of ordinary language philosophy. The argument now concerns the question of what must be presupposed if discourse is to function at all, and is again framed as a withering refutation of the Epistemologist's claim merely to be offering an account of our conventional epistemic practices:

> If [the Epistemologist rejoins by saying,] "Since the word 'perception,' in the sense intended, is well known in the world, and since the word 'with respect to an

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[16] The foregoing exchange occurs at *Prasannapadā* 70.1-71.9; cf., Appendix II, nn.53, 55, 59. We can note that Candrakīrti is in effect making the same point that J. L. Austin makes contra A. J. Ayer, who similarly purports to be offering an account simply of our conventional epistemic practices: "...is it not rather delicately hinted in this passage that the plain man is really a bit naive? It 'does not normally occur' to him that his belief in 'the existence of material things' needs justifying – but perhaps it *ought* to occur to him. He has 'no doubt whatsoever' that he really perceives chairs and tables – but perhaps he ought to have a doubt or two and not be so easily 'satisfied'.... Though ostensibly the plain man's position is here just being described, a little quiet undermining is already being effected by these turns of phrase." (Austin 1962: 9) Cf., Appendix II, n.52, on Dignāga's appeal to *upacāra* (which, it seems to me, Candrakīrti here fairly accurately represents).

[17] Cf., Appendix II, nn.61-62.

> object' (*pratyartha*) is not well known, we rely upon the basis of the word's etymology precisely in terms of the locus [of the sense faculty]" – [if this is said,] we respond: This word 'perceptible' is indeed well-known in the world; but it is described *by us* [and not by you] precisely as it is in the world. But if, with contempt for worldly categories as they are established, this derivation is being made, [then] there would also be contempt for the well-known word [i.e., "*pratyakṣa*"]. And based on that [disregard for the well-known sense of the word], what is [commonly] called 'perceptible' would not be such.

In this way, Candrakīrti reminds us that the word 'perceptible' (*pratyakṣa*) is one that is taken from ordinary language. Because of this, the Epistemologist's peculiar account of perception (according to which, '*pratyakṣa*' denotes a faculty with privileged access to unique particulars) can be advanced only and precisely to the extent that such ordinary usage turns out to be *wrong*; that is, if the Epistemologist's account were the preferred one, then ordinary people would always be mistaken in their use of the word, since they typically use it with respect to the apprehension of medium-sized objects. (As we saw Candrakīrti say earlier, "everybody would be mistaken about what is under definition," *lakṣyavaiparītyaṃ lokasya syāt*). Thus, if the Epistemologist's account were appropriate, what people ordinarily call 'perceptible' would not, in fact, be rightly so called. But how could we ever be in a position to *say* whether the Epistemologist's account of 'perceptibility' is adequate, if what he is in fact explaining is something other than what we mean by 'perceptible'? Candrakīrti stresses, moreover, that *it is not possible that people should thus be wrong all the time* – for if they were, then there would be no possibility of the kind of meaningful discourse in which Candrakīrti and his interlocutor are now engaged! He concludes by stressing this particularly with respect to one of the cardinal tenets of epistemology as elaborated by Buddhists such as Dignāga – viz., the characterization of *pratyakṣa* as "devoid of conceptual elaboration" (*kalpanāpoḍham*): "And because you accept that only that awareness which is devoid of conception is perception; and since nobody's discourse is by way of that [kind of awareness]; and because of the desirability of explaining worldly discourse with respect

to reliable warrants and cognizables – [your] conception of the reliable warrant which is perception becomes (*saṃjāyate*) quite senseless."[18]

The untenability of the Epistemologist's characterization of perception (viz., as definitively non-conceptual) is, finally, the point that is chiefly advanced by Candrakīrti's emphasis on the adjectival sense of the word *pratyakṣa*. This has been well put by Tom Tillemans, who notes:

> The thrust of [Candrakīrti's] argumentation on etymologies of *pratyakṣa* is, in effect, to eliminate the privileged status which perception has in his adversaries' systems, for once we grant a non-conceptual *pratyakṣa* which simply sees the given stripped of concepts about it, the road to *svalakṣaṇa*, real *ākāra*, 'common appearances', etc. becomes dangerously open. By shifting etymologies Candrakīrti tries to make perception banal: any consciousness, conceptual or not, caused by a perceptible (*pratyakṣa*) object will be termed *pratyakṣa*.[19]

Moreover, this final charge of incoherence – this charge, that is, that his interlocutor's account is "senseless" (*vyartha*) – completes Candrakīrti's transcendental argument against his interlocutor's skeptical contention that Candrakīrti's claims are unjustified insofar as they cannot be warranted by the kinds of *pramāṇas* that the Epistemologist admits as uniquely conferring justification. Thus, in concluding the present argument, Candrakīrti says that his interlocutor's conception (*kalpanā*)[20] of perception is quite literally "without sense" (*vyarthā*). This is because the Epistemologist's account is really an account of a narrowly and peculiarly conceived sense of the word 'perception,' one according to which the word denotes only that epistemic faculty which is constitutively non-conceptual. But insofar as the word is conventionally used simply to characterize whatever is "not invisible" (*aparokṣa*),[21] the question of non-conceptuality is not

[18] The foregoing exchange can be found at *Prasannapadā* 73.9-74.7; cf., Appendix II, n.78.

[19] Tillemans 1990, vol.1: 44. Cf., n.10, above, on the contrast between this way of Candrakīrti's making his point, and the way that is suggested by the reading of this example favored by Siderits (and by my earlier article).

[20] A word used, no doubt, with irony, since it is precisely *kalpanā* that the Epistemologist's *pratyakṣa* is without.

[21] 71.10; cf., Appendix II, n.62.

involved in what most people mean by *pratyakṣa* – in which case, the Epistemologist's account can only be the preferred one if most people are *wrong* in their ordinary use of the word.

Hence, Candrakīrti can rightly say that nobody transacts any discourse involving the Epistemologist's sense of the word (*tena lokasya saṃvyavahārābhāva*).[22] Somewhat more tendentiously, we might understand Candrakīrti's claim as being that adopting his interlocutor's peculiar sense of the word would (counterfactually) *entail* that there is a complete "absence of meaningful discourse on the part of the world."[23] That is, acceptance of the Epistemologist's account would be tantamount to the conclusion that most of the discourse in the world is not meaningful. Candrakīrti can rightly adduce this as a manifestly absurd entailment of the Epistemologist's project, giving this fact as the *reason* for the senselessness of his interlocutor's conception[24] – for it is necessarily the case that most of the discourse in the world is meaningful. How could it be otherwise? Given the alternative, there would be no possibility of the very discourse in which Candrakīrti and his interlocutor are engaged.

That my reading of Candrakīrti has here involved some "rational reconstruction" is clear from the extent to which I must here emphasize a part of the argument which is, as we find it developed by Candrakīrti, somewhat dwarfed by the argument from *vyutpatti*. Thus, Candrakīrti concludes this whole discussion of *pratyakṣa* by concluding with the point I have said he is driving toward – viz., that *pratyakṣa* means 'perceptible,' rather than its picking out a privileged faculty of 'perception': "Therefore, in the world, if *any* (*sarvam eva*) subject of characterization – whether it be a unique particular or an

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[22] Taking *tena*, "by that," to mean *by that sense of the word favored by Candrakīrti's interlocutor*.

[23] Taking *tena* in the sense of "thus," and the remainder of the phrase as stating the counterfactual entailment. The former reading is probably the preferable reading of Candrakīrti's Sanskrit, though I think that this reading also expresses Candrakīrti's conceptual point.

[24] With the complete phrase being *tena lokasya saṃvyavahārābhāvāt*, "because of the absence of discourse on the part of the world by means of that." Cf., Appendix II, nn.76, 78.

abstraction – is not invisible, because of being directly apprehended, then it is established as perceptible, together with the awareness that has it as its object [which is also established as *pratyakṣa*]."[25] Clearly, the crux of the argument, for Candrakīrti, is thus that *pratyakṣa* means 'perceptible' rather than 'perception' – though he here concedes that "the awareness that has [a perceptible] as its object" (*tadviṣayeṇa jñānena saha*) also goes by the name *pratyakṣa*, which perhaps undermine his apparent contention that the conventional use of the word never includes (what his interlocutor wishes to stress) the designation of an epistemic faculty.

This concession need not be a problem, however, if we instead emphasize the other point Candrakīrti has made in concluding – viz., that what is conventionally called 'perceptible' includes both particulars *and abstractions* (*yadi vā svalakṣaṇaṃ sāmānyalakṣaṇaṃ vā*), so that, as the awareness that has perceptibles as its object (*tadviṣayajñāna*), *pratyakṣa* can (emphatically contra epistemologists such as Dignāga) have abstractions as its object. While Candrakīrti has thus emphasized the argument from *vyutpatti* – according to which, it is the adjectival sense of *pratyakṣa* that is primary – it is nevertheless clear that what he particularly wants to argue is that people do not conventionally understand '*pratyakṣa*' to pick out a *privileged* epistemic faculty which, in virtue of its being "free of conceptual elaboration" (*kalpanāpoḍha*), affords special access to something ultimately real.[26] It therefore seems to me that, particularly insofar as Candrakīrti has been forced to concede that *pratyakṣa* does also designate the awareness that intends perceptibles, his fundamental point is just as well (if not better) advanced if we instead stress the other point Candrakīrti has made here – viz., that

[25] 75.2-4; cf., Appendix II, n.82.

[26] It is quite clear that, while his emphasis has thus been on the arguments from *vyutpatti*, Candrakīrti has meant to question this commitment, as such. Moreover, his elaboration of this point involves another of the smoking guns which lead from our section of the *Prasannapadā* back to Dignāga; for Candrakīrti has his interlocutor try to salvage his contention regarding the *kalpanāpoḍhatva* of *pratyakṣa* by appealing to a passage which Dignāga does, in fact, quote. Cf., Appendix II, n.79.

worldly discourse does not proceed by way of his interlocutor's tendentious sense of the word (*tena ca lokasya saṃvyavahārābhāva*). Rather, people typically speak of things that epistemologists such as Dignāga would consider "abstractions" (*sāmānyalakṣaṇa*) – such as jars and other medium-sized dry goods – as "perceptible." *And it is a condition of the possibility of meaningful discourse that people similarly understand familiar words*, such that the Epistemologist's appeal to a peculiarly technical sense is the reason for his project's being "senseless" (*vyartha*).

On this reading, then, Candrakīrti has effectively made an argument very much like the transcendental arguments made by many twentieth-century ordinary language philosophers against the radical skepticism which, they claim, motivates foundationalist projects such as that of A. J. Ayer. According to one reading of such foundationalist projects (specifically, J. L. Austin's reading of Ayer), a peculiarly technical sense of familiar epistemic terms advances the "wish to produce a species of statement that will be *incorrigible*; and the real virtue of this invented sense of 'perceive' is that, since what is perceived in this sense [i.e., introspectable sense-data] *has* to exist and *has* to be as it appears, in saying what I perceive in this sense I *can't be wrong*."[27] This desire for incorrigible certainty is in turn based on the kind of epistemic skepticism which urges that we can never claim to have *knowledge* when it is yet possible that we could be wrong.

Against such a project, J. L. Austin has argued that there is a very real sense in which such a degree of doubt *cannot* really obtain: "But, perhaps more importantly, it is also implied, even taken for granted, that there is *room* for doubt and suspicion, whether or not the plain man feels any.... But in fact the plain man would regard doubt in such a case, not as far-fetched or over-refined or somehow unpractical, but as plain *nonsense*; he

[27] Austin 1962: 103. Cf., Chapter 2, n.97, for Hayes's characterization of Dignāga as similarly desirous of a uniquely incorrigible sort of cognition.

would say, quite correctly, 'Well, if that's not seeing a real chair then *I don't know what is*.'"[28] And the ordinary intuition of non-philosophers is here to be heeded, since "it is important to remember that talk of deception only *makes sense* against a background of general non-deception."[29] That is, a condition of the possibility of meaningful discourse is that we generally believe precisely the kinds of the things the radical skeptic claims to doubt. As Austin says, for example, with respect to the case of "other minds," "It seems ... that believing in other persons, in authority and testimony, is an essential part of the act of communicating, an act which we all constantly perform.... But there is no 'justification' for our doing [these things] as such."[30] Thus, an attempt to explain our most basic epistemic practices, insofar as any such attempt must make use of the kinds of meaningful discourse which already presuppose such practices, can only get off the ground if the very things it purports to explain do not, in fact, require explanation. If the possibility of meaningful discourse (including such discourse as expresses the skeptic's doubt!) entails that we necessarily presuppose the kinds of things the skeptic claims to doubt, then it is not our crediting basic epistemic functions that is unreasonable; rather, *what is unreasonable is the skeptic's demand for justification*.[31]

[28] *Ibid.*: 10. Apropos of the normative contention that such doubt *cannot* obtain, Cavell (1979: 212) is helpful: "I am in no way hoping, nor would I wish, to convince anyone that certain statements cannot be made or ought not be made. My interest in statements is in what they do mean and imply. If 'cannot' or 'ought' are to come in here at all, then I confess to urging that you cannot say something, relying on what is ordinarily meant in saying it, and mean something other than would ordinarily be meant."

[29] Austin 1962: 11.

[30] Austin 1979: 115.

[31] This whole line of argument has been put particularly succinctly by P. F. Strawson (1959: 35), who says of the radical skeptic: "He pretends to accept a conceptual scheme, but at the same time quietly rejects one of the conditions of its employment. Thus his doubts are unreal, not simply because they are logically irresoluble doubts, but because they amount to the rejection of the whole conceptual scheme within which alone such doubts make sense. So, naturally enough, the alternative to doubt which he offers us is the suggestion that we do not really, or should not really, have the conceptual scheme that we do have; that we do not really, or should not really, mean what we think we mean, what we do mean. But this alternative is absurd. For the whole process of reasoning only starts because the scheme is as it is; and we cannot change it even if we would." For related discussions, see also Cavell 1979 (especially pp.191, ff.); and Williams 1996. Note that Donald Davidson's transcendental argument advances a stronger claim, in that he specifically argues in such a way as to show that most beliefs must not simply cohere, as it were, but must also be *true*: "What makes interpretation possible ... is the fact that we can dismiss a priori the chance of massive error. A theory of interpretation cannot be correct that makes a man assent to very many false sentences: it must generally be the case that a sentence is true when a speaker holds it to be." (Davidson

Candrakīrti's argument is, as I have suggested in explicating the conclusion to his critique of his interlocutor's account of *pratyakṣa*, a closely analogous one. Note, though, that the arguments of these twentieth-century ordinary language philosophers seem particularly to be framed against what Robert Stern has characterized as *epistemic* skepticism – that is, against the kind of global skepticism which questions whether we really have *any* knowledge. In contrast, Candrakīrti's engagement with the Epistemologist, as I suggested early on, represents an attempt to meet the challenge of what Stern has characterized as *normativist justificatory* skepticism – epistemologists such as Dignāga do not, that is, doubt that we have reliable epistemic practices at our disposal, only that Candrakīrti's characteristic claims can be warranted by any of them.[32] Among other things, this difference means that we must again attend to the ways in which Candrakīrti's argument is particularly guided by the intuitions that find expression in the metaphysical claim I have attributed to him. Thus, Candrakīrti finds it incoherent for his interlocutor to demand that we *justify* our conventional practices (that is, that we adduce something *other* than our conventions as the *reason* for their being held) *precisely insofar as conventions are all there are*; for as we have seen, Candrakīrti's characteristic metaphysical claim is that our conventions (epistemic and otherwise) are examples of the kinds of "dependent indications" (*upādāya prajñapti*) from which we learn about the world, with all of these in turn representing examples of the "dependently originated" (*pratītyasamutpanna*) phenomena which are all that exist.[33]

Candrakīrti returns us to this point with the conclusion to his engagement with the Epistemologist. Having thus argued that his interlocutor's account of *pratyakṣa*

1984: 168-9) Davidson's argument (like, I submit, Candrakīrti's) thus explicitly brings in something external to discourse.

[32] Cf., Chapter 4,n.32.

[33] Cf., *MMK* 24.19a-b: *apratītyasamutpanno dharmaḥ kaścin na vidyate* ("there do not exist any *dharmas* whatsoever that are not dependently originated").

contradicts the conventional usage, Candrakīrti effectively tells us – by endorsing (with typically Naiyāyika definitions) the list of *pramāṇas* admitted by Naiyāyikas – that Nyāya epistemology adequately conveys a sense of our epistemic practices as they are conventionally understood.[34] His conclusion then emphasizes what Candrakīrti takes to be chiefly significant about this fourfold scheme of reliable warrants:

> And these are established in dependence upon one another: given reliable warrants, there are objects to be known, and given objects to be known, there are reliable warrants. But it is emphatically *not* the case that the establishment of reliable warrants and their objects is essential (*svābhāvikī*). Therefore, let the mundane be just as it is seen.[35]

What Candrakīrti finally stresses, then, is again the *interrelational* character of reliable warrants (*pramāṇas*) and their objects (*prameyas*) – that is, their being (like everything) *upādāya prajñaptayaḥ*. It therefore seems that what Candrakīrti chiefly objects to in his interlocutor's account of *pratyakṣa* is its being offered as a somehow *independent* epistemic faculty, a privileged and autonomous perspective on what exists. Indeed, Candrakīrti here finally makes clear that his entire critique of the Epistemologist is ultimately motivated by his view that the Epistemologist's account of *pramāṇas* takes the establishment of these to be "self-existent" or "essential" (*svābhāvikī*) – just as, I suggested in Chapter 4, Nāgārjuna's *Vigrahavyāvartanī* disavows only that *kind* of "thesis" (*pratijñā*) which is thought to require *a posteriori* justification by appeal to reliable warrants, insofar as Nāgārjuna thinks the very idea of independent warrants necessarily presupposes some such essence. It is, then, specifically against the view that *pramāṇas* exist "*svābhāvikī*" that Candrakīrti stresses that *pratyakṣa* is in no way

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[34] 75.7-9 (cf., Appendix II, n.85): "But awareness which has as its object [something] invisible, [such awareness being] produced by a mark which has invariable concomitance with the thing to be proven, [such awareness is known as] inference. The speech of those who are accomplished, who know directly things which are beyond the senses – this is [known as] tradition. Understanding of a thing not [previously] experienced, based on [its] similarity [with something else is known as] comparison, as [when it is said,] 'a cow is like an ox.' Thus, on the part of the world, understanding of objects is established [as being] based on this fourfold [scheme of[reliable warrants." The fourth, of course, is *pratyakṣa*, Candrakīrti's conclusions regarding which immediately precede this passage.

[35] 75.10-12; cf., Appendix II, n.85.

privileged: "But [illusions] such as [that of] two moons do not, from the point of view of the awareness of one without cataracts, have the quality of perceptibility, while from the point of view of one with cataracts, [such illusions] have precisely the quality of being perceptible."[36] And Candrakīrti's point is that, in the final analysis, *everyone* who has not realized ultimate truth for him- or herself (everyone, that is, who is "*anārya*") has, relative to the ultimate truth, "cataracts."

This concern to reject the privileged autonomy of *pratyakṣa*, then, is the reason for Candrakīrti's stressing the adjectival sense of *pratyakṣa* as meaning "perceptible"; and if he then retreats a bit and allows that the word is also customarily used to designate the kind of awareness that has such a "perceptible" for its object (*tadviṣayeṇa jñānena saha*), it is nevertheless the case that his account has returned our attention to the fact that the epistemic situation is a definitively *relational* one, necessarily involving the interdependence of subject and object.[37] This suggests that, on Candrakīrti's view, his interlocutor's account of *pratyakṣa* as "free of conceptual elaboration" (*kalpanāpoḍha*) is particularly designed to yield an epistemic faculty which discloses things as they exist *independently of any conceptualizing activity on our part*. What Candrakīrti finally thinks is incoherent, then, is the Epistemologist's demand that Candrakīrti's metaphysical claim be warranted by an epistemic instrument that is independent of our involvement with the world, and that shows us something of how the world "really" is – with this being incoherent insofar as Candrakīrti's claim just is that *nothing exists that way*. That is, nothing exists *independently* – which means, to be sure, that our experience of the

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[36] 75.4-5; cf., Appendix II, n.82. Clearly, this point exactly is relevant to the intuition of so-called "Svātantrika Mādhyamikas" such as Jñānagarbha and Śāntarakṣita, whose notion of "true" and "false conventional" (*tathya-* and *mithyā-saṃvṛti*) can be seen as motivated precisely by the desire to credit some modes of awareness as more reliable. Cf., Appendix II, n.82, for further reflections on this, and for Candrakīrti's possibly related idea of *alokasaṃvṛti* ("non-worldly conventional").

[37] To the extent that (contra such as interpreters as Richard Hayes) Dignāga's project is adequately characterized as a type of idealism, that project is ultimately framed by the desire to argue that *subjects* are, in some sense, all that finally exist.

world will always involve some dependence upon our own conceptualizing activity; *but it also means that such conceptualizing activity is dependent upon the world.*

5.iii. "*Laukikam eva-astu*": Candrakirti's defense of the conventional as a metaphysical principle

If there is, for Candrakirti, a sense in which everyone thus has "cataracts" relative to the ultimate truth, there is also a sense in which his whole point is that *the only ultimate truth is that there is no ultimate truth*, if such is conceived as something more "real" underlying and enabling our conventional epistemic practices. I suggest, that is, that Candrakirti's metaphysical claim is effectively that the "ultimate truth" consists in *the abstract state of affairs of there being no such thing.* Indeed, the fact that Candrakirti must thus have in mind a universally obtaining, abstract state of affairs is precisely what I have in mind in characterizing his as a fundamentally *metaphysical* claim. And it is what I have in mind in refusing the characterization of Candrakirti as a "skeptic"; for in fact, I am attributing to him a very strong claim. The claim in question is, moreover, one in which the value of the conventional finally figures very prominently – and this despite the recurrent disparagement of the conventional (and the corresponding exaltation of the ultimate) which might lead one to suppose it is Candrakirti (and not his interlocutor) who is the "skeptic" here.

Instances of Candrakirti's apparently disparaging the conventional are, to be sure, numerous, and could be multiplied at great length. They are particularly clear when Candrakirti is extolling the ultimate truth, apparently emphasizing its radical "otherness." Thus, for example, he asks: "What is the use (*pravṛtti*) of speech, or of awareness, with regard to the ultimate? For the ultimate – which is independent of anything else, tranquil, to be individually realized on the part of the venerable – completely exceeds all

conceptual elaboration. It cannot be indicated, nor can it be known."[38] The ultimate truth, as Candrakīrti says early on in his engagement with the Buddhist Epistemologist, is "a matter of venerable silence" (*āryas tuṣṇibhāva*). Passages such as these may well make it reasonable to conclude (as John Dunne has) that "For Candrakīrti ... conceptuality is so broad in scope and buddhas are so non-conceptual that they have no thoughts or cognitive images at all.... Not only does such a buddha not see the ordinary things of the world, he does not even know ultimate reality because nothing at all occurs in a buddha's mind. Indeed, it would seem that Candrakīrti's buddhas do not know anything at all."[39]

Such disparagement of the conventional shows up in a peculiar way in Candrakīrti's treatment of the category of *svabhāva* – a word which, despite its conventionally attested use, Candrakīrti does not wish to allow into play at all. The main reason for this is that Candrakīrti takes *svabhāva* as synonymous with the one thing which, as a Buddhist, he is most concerned to refute: "this word *ātma* ('self') has as a synonym the word *svabhāva*, and what is without *self* is without *svabhāva*."[40] The assimilation of these two categories – that is, the view that the "selves" (*ātma*) thought to belong to persons are closely analogous to "essences" (*svabhāva*), which may thus be said to be the "selves" of *things* – of course reflects the characteristically Mahāyāna tendency to emphasize both the "selflessness" of *persons* and of *things* (i.e., both *pudgala-* and *dharma-nairātmya*). Insofar as he thus takes the category of *svabhāva* as typifying everything Buddhists are up against, Candrakīrti – the champion of the conventional, who says "let the worldly be as it is seen" (*laukikam eva-astu*

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[38] *Prasannapadā* 493.10-11: *kutas tatra paramārthe vācāṃ pravṛttiḥ, kuto vā jñānasya? sa hi paramārtho 'parapratyayaḥ śāntaḥ pratyātmavedya āryāṇāṃ sarvaprapañcātitaḥ. Sa na-upadiśyeta, na cāpi jñāyeta.*

[39] Dunne 1996: 545, 548. Cf., Chapter 4, n.37; and again, cf., Griffiths 1994 for an argument regarding the extent to which the Buddhist tradition more generally is impelled towards such a conclusion.

[40] *Prasannapadā* 437.4-5: *ātmaśabdo 'yaṃ svabhāvaśabdaparyāyaḥ, yaś ca-anātmā niḥsvabhāva.*

yathādṛṣṭham) – ventures a truly exceptional dismissal of even the *conventional* sense of the word *svabhāva*, with a correspondingly disparaging characterization of the tendency nevertheless to use it. Of the conventional usage, he says:

> Here [in the world], according to the etymology – [which has it that] a *svabhāva* is an existent (*bhāva*) by itself (*svaḥ*) – whatever thing is made is *not* designated in the world as a *svabhāva* – as for example, the heat of water, which is produced by the effort of demons with respect to a primary element, or the [idea that] the existence of rubies, etc., belongs to quartz (*karketana*), etc. But that which is *not* made is a *svabhāva* – as for example the heat of fire, or the existence of rubies, etc., on the part of [really] produced rubies, etc; for since these are not produced in dependence upon anything else, they are called 'self-existent' (*svabhāva*).[41]

Clearly, such examples suggest that the conventional usage of *svabhāva* is much like what Candrakīrti himself reports as the conventional usage of *svalakṣaṇa*, with both similarly designating the kinds of "defining properties" exemplified by the heat of fire, the hardness of earth, etc.[42] As we saw in the previous chapter, however, Candrakīrti urged against his interlocutor's peculiarly technical usage of *svalakṣaṇa* that the conventional usage of that term should be retained. In the case of *svabhāva*, on the other hand, he here continues to make precisely the opposite point:

> But now we say, with respect to the established worldly convention – [according to which,] *svabhāva* is what is not made – that even the heat which is the *svabhāva* of fire should not be accepted as being so, because it is made.[43]

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[41] 260.4-8: 260.4-8: *Iha hi svo bhāvaḥ svabhāva iti vyutpatter yaḥ kṛtakaḥ padārthaḥ sa loke naiva svabhāva iti vyapadiśyate, tadyathā apām auṣṇyaṃ dhātupiśācaprayatnaniṣpāditaḥ karketanādināṃ padmarāgādibhāvaś ca. yas tv akṛtakaḥ sa svabhāvas tadyathā agner auṣṇyaṃ jātānāṃ padmarāgādināṃ padmarāgādisvabhāvaś ca; sa hi teṣāṃ padārthāntarasaṃparkājanitatvāt svabhāva ity ucyate.* La Vallée Poussin (1970b: 260, n.4) notes that the reading *dhātupiśāca* is questionable ("douteuse"), and unattested in the Tibetan, which instead attributes the false appearance of *rubies* to the "effort of jewelers" (*nor sgyur mkhan gyi 'bad pas*).

[42] Cf., Chapter 4, n.62. Cf., too, Chapter 4, n.69, regarding the characteristically Ābhidharmika conflation of the notions of *svalakṣaṇa* and *svabhāva*. This would make it seem that it may in fact be *Candrakīrti* who is here departing from conventional usage, insofar as he wishes to allow the conventional usage of *svalakṣaṇa* without sanctioning the (eminently conventional!) conflation thereof with *svabhāva*.

[43] 260.9-10: *tad evam akṛtakaḥ svabhāva iti lokavyavahāre vyavasthite vayam idānīṃ brūmo yad etad auṣṇyaṃ tad apy agneḥ svabhāvo na bhavatīti gṛhyatāṃ kṛtakatvāt.* He then explains that, insofar as *fire* is made (by, e.g., a magnifying class and the sun), its "essence," too, is brought into being.

With respect to this exceptional flaunting of attested conventional usage, Candrakīrti anticipates the kind of objection that he himself might level, and answers it with an apparent rebuke of the conventional:

> [Objection:] But that heat is the *svabhāva* of fire is well known [even] to cowherds and women. [Response:] We did not say it isn't well-known; rather, we say that it is not *suitable* to be an essence (*svabhāvo bhavitum arhati*), owing to its not having the characteristics of an essence. But by virtue of relying on the errors of ignorance, everyone accepts what has been brought into existence – which is really *without* essence – as being endowed with an essence. For just as one with cataracts, owing to the condition of cataracts, is fixed on the essence of hair, etc. – which is unreal – as being endowed with an essence; in the same way, owing to the condition of the sight which is judgment being afflicted by the eye disease of ignorance,[44] the foolish are fixed on what has been brought into existence – which is without essence – as being endowed with an essence. The expound [their] definition (*lakṣaṇa*) according to this fixation, [saying that] heat is the defining property (*svalakṣaṇa*) of fire, with it in mind (*iti kṛtvā*) that this is its very own characteristic owing to its being uncommon, since it is not perceived anywhere else. And the Buddha, according to what is well-known by the unenlightened masses, presented this [kind] of nature (*svarūpa*) as conventional (*sāṃvṛtam*) in the Abhidharma.[45]

This reference to what is taught "in the Abhidharma" alludes, of course, to precisely the examples of the conventional sense of *svalakṣaṇa* that Candrakīrti adduces contra his interlocutor,[46] and Candrakīrti's point here depends on his having switched from *svabhāva* to *svalakṣaṇa*. That is, he readily allows that we conventionally speak of "defining characteristics" (*svalakṣaṇa*), of which the heat of fire is indeed an example. What he refuses to allow is that such things are entitled (*arhati*) to be called *svabhāva*, "self-existent"; for on Candrakīrti's view (and the conventional usage of *svabhāva* notwithstanding), the very idea of *svabhāva* is by definition the idea of an *ontological*

[44] Note that Candrakīrti uses precisely the same expression (*avidyātimiropahatamatinayanatayā*), in very much the same context, at p.58.1-2; cf., Appendix II, n.7.

[45] 260.14-261.6: *Nanu ca gopālāṅganājanaprasiddham* [de Jong, following the Tibetan, would have *agopālāṅga...*, but I don't see why] *etad agner auṣṇyaṃ svabhāva iti. Kiṃ khalv asmābhir uktaṃ na prasiddham iti. Etat tu vayaṃ brūmo na-ayaṃ svabhāvo bhavitum arhati svabhāvalakṣaṇaviyuktatvāt, avidyāviparyāsānugamāt tu loko niḥsvabhāvam eva bhāvajātaṃ sasvabhāvatvena pratipannaḥ. Yathā hi taimirikās timirapratyayād asantam eva keśādisvabhāvaṃ sasvabhāvatvena-abhiniviṣṭāḥ. evam avidyātimiropahatamatinayanatayā bālā niḥsvabhāvaṃ bhāvajātaṃ sasvabhāvatvena-abhiniviṣṭā yathābhiniveśaṃ lakṣaṇam ācakṣate, agner auṣṇyaṃ svalakṣaṇam, tato 'nyatra-anupalambhād asādhāraṇatvena svam eva lakṣaṇam iti kṛtvā. Bālajanaprasiddhyā-eva eṣāṃ sāṃvṛtaṃ svarūpam abhidharme vyavasthāpitaṃ.*

[46] As La Vallée Poussin (1970b: 261, n.5) rightly notes; cf., Chapter 4, n.63.

correlate of defining properties.[47] This he will not allow, and he here (as elsewhere) likens the plight of the unenlightened to that of people who are perpetually befuddled by eye disease. Again, then, one might well wonder what could be more "skeptical" than thus to dismiss the entire world of conventional discourse as in some important way false.

Nevertheless, I have urged that, in the exchange between the Epistemologist and Candrakīrti, there is an important sense in which it is *the Epistemologist* who is the "skeptic," concerned that Candrakīrti is unable to provide justification for his claims according to accredited warrants. And Candrakīrti refuses his interlocutor's demands for epistemic justification *not* because Candrakīrti makes no claims, but because his claims are precisely such as demand a different *kind* of justification. Thus, I have argued that Candrakīrti's is the metaphysical claim that *there is nothing more real than our conventions*, insofar as *conventionally* – which is the same as to say *dependently* – is the only way that anything *can* exist. And this is not a metaphysical claim that can be justified by way of the Buddhist Epistemologist's philosophical approach, since the Epistemologist's peculiarly technical usage of conventional categories *just is* an attempt to get at something more "real" behind our conventions. Notwithstanding (or at least, qualifying) his recurrent extolling of the seemingly remote "ultimate truth," then, Candrakīrti's metaphysical claim is effectively the claim that the "ultimate truth" consists in *the abstract state of affairs of there being no such thing.*

Clearly, though, the interpretation I am thus proposing requires some accounting for the particular form of Candrakīrti's praises of the "ultimate." It also, and more basically, requires some attention to the idea of an "abstract state of affairs." It is, to a large extent, with this idea in mind that I have been characterizing Candrakīrti's as a properly *metaphysical* claim; for as I understand it, a "metaphysical" claim is one that is thought to obtain *universally* and *necessarily*, with such claims therefore necessarily

[47] Cf., Loux 1995 (cited in Chapter 4, n.70).

referring to *abstract states of affairs*.[48] Paul Griffiths has quite helpfully elucidated this point with respect to the case of some specifically Buddhist metaphysical claims:

> Even if no specific existent is eternal, the causal process that links them must be if it is beginningless and endless. Putting matters in this way suggests that a theory of types is the best conceptual tool to explain what is going on here. Every member of the set of all existents has causal and temporal properties; these are first-type existents, bearing first-order properties. They are the reals, the dharmas. All these first-type existents have, among others, the first-order property 'being impermanent.' But the members of the second-type set of all universally applicable first-order properties of this kind, that is, the members of the set of first-order properties that apply to all first-order existents, do not themselves possess the properties that they are. So, for example, the property 'being produced causally' (*pratityasamutpannatva*) is not itself produced causally. This is quite normal; the property 'being a president of the United States' is not itself a president of the United States (though, of course, every possessor of it is). Simply put, for [the kinds of texts Griffiths considers,] *the universally applicable first-order properties through which the standard claims about impermanence are made are themselves atemporal states of affairs. They obtain, if they do, atemporally, which is to say permanently and everlastingly*....[49]

Particularly in the context of the characteristically Buddhist aversion to "universals" (with Dignāga and Dharmakīrti's ideas regarding *sāmāṇyalakṣaṇas* being a case in point), as well as to things "permanent" more generally, this point is prima facie counter-intuitive – and yet it is also, I think, incontrovertible, on pain of self-referential incoherence. That is, for a Buddhist to say, for example, that "all existents are dependently originated" is, *ipso facto*, to make the claim that there is an abstract state of affairs (viz., the dependently originated character of all existents) which is not, itself, dependent upon anything – or at least, that is what a Buddhist must be committed to if the claim itself is to be true, insofar as its concerning "all existents" necessarily entails its

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[48] I am not, therefore, taking *metaphysics* in the sense intended by, for example, Loux (1998), for whom metaphysics consists in the eminently Aristotelian exercise of "category theory"; cf., Loux 1998: 11, ff. Such would, rather, more adequately reflect the ontological project of the Abhidharmikas than Candrakīrti's Mādhyamika project as I understand it.

[49] Griffiths 1994: 177-78; my emphasis. This passage is part of a longer section (pp.173, ff.) on "Metaphysical Predicates," the entirety of which is quite to the point here. As another example of such, one might adduce the characteristically existentialist claim that "man has no nature" – which, if it is to count as true, can be rephrased as "it is human nature for man to have no nature."

obtaining *always* and *universally*.[50] Precisely as much is admitted in what is surely among the most famous and widely discussed passages in Buddhist literature, which Candrakīrti himself cites in various places: "Whether or not Tathāgatas arise, the nature (*dharmatā*) of phenomena (*dharmāṇām*) abides."[51] In other words, the state of affairs rightly perceived by the Buddha obtains (as it would have regardless of whether he had awakened to it) quite independently of anyone's apprehension thereof – a reading which makes this passage virtually a statement of a realist conception of *truth*.

In the *Prasannapadā*, Candrakīrti has an interlocutor adduce this text, wondering whether the first *kārikā* of Nāgārjuna's text contradicts it. Candrakīrti's response at this point is to urge that "the master composed the treatise on Madhyamaka in order to indicate the difference between sūtras of provisional and of definitive meaning."[52] In the context of this citation of the passage, though, Candrakīrti is particularly concerned with

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[50] It seems to me that it would be a very interesting exercise to carry out a more extensive analysis of some characteristically Buddhist claims along these lines, with Plantinga (1980) advancing a very good set of conceptual tools which could be brought to bear on the Buddhist context.

[51] *Utpādād vā tathāgatānām anutpādād vā tathāgatānāṃ sthithaivaiṣā dharmāṇāṃ dharmatā* (Tib., *de bzhin gshegs pa rnams byung yang rung / de bzhin gshegs pa rnams ma byung yang rung / chos rnams kyi chos nyid 'di ni gnas pa kho na*). The Sanskrit of this version is from Candrakīrti's citation at *Prasannapadā* 40.1, to which occurrence La Vallée Poussin appends a note with some relevant cross-references. The passage occurs, with slight variants, throughout Buddhist literature – as, for example, in the *Aṣṭasāhasrikāprajñāpāramitā Sūtra* (Vaidya, 1960a, p.135), where it occurs as *utpādād vā tathāgatānāṃ anutpādād vā tathaivaitāni lakṣaṇāni sthitāni* ("whether or not Tathāgatas arise, these characteristics abide thus"); and the *Saṃdhinirmocana Sūtra* (Powers, 1995, p.62), where it occurs as *de bzhin gshegs pa rnams byung yang rung ma byung yang rung ste / rtag pa rtag pa'i dus dang / ther zug ther zug gi dus su chos gnas par bya ba'i phyir chos rnams kyi chos nyid dbyings de ni rnam par gnas pa kho na yin pa* ("whether or not Tathāgatas arise, since phenomena abide permanently and everlastingly, the sphere which is the nature of phenomena *abides*").

Discussions of this passage can be found, inter alia, in Conze (1967: 93), who cites the *Aṅguttara Nikāya*; Jackson (1993: 48), who adduces this as an example of a correspondence theory of truth among Buddhists; Ronald Davidson (1995: 295, 314), who reads the passage in a similar way; and Griffiths (1994: 177). Griffiths translates from the *Saṃdhinirmocana Sūtra*, and his discussion comes in the context of his discussion of "Metaphysical Predicates" (cf., n.49, above); mysteriously, though, he reads the passage as having to do with the permanence of *Buddhas*, which seems to me precisely the *opposite* of what it says (though of course, insofar as certain accounts of Buddhahood make the latter coextensive with "reality," Griffiths's conclusion might follow). Interestingly, Kumārila adduces this passage to make the point that, their critiques of the alleged *apauruṣeyatva* of the Vedas notwithstanding, the Buddhists, too, held that their own scriptures were similarly transcendent; cf., La Vallée Poussin 1902: 370, n.1, citing the *Tantravārttika*. While Kumārila's reading seems to me to miss the point in much the same way as Griffiths's, it is nonetheless the case that the Buddhists did indeed often attribute a sort of transcendence to Buddhist scriptures; cf., in addition to La Vallée Poussin's 1902 article, Collins 1998: 49 (including n.62).

[52] 40.7-41.1: *madhyamakaśāstraṃ praṇitam ācāryeṇa neyanitārthasūtrāntavibhāgopadarśanārthaṃ*.

whether or not it is right to say (as he has) that Nāgārjuna's text is dedicated to denying that any characteristics can be predicated of *pratītyasamutpāda*, so that his interest in this particular text is especially in whether in fact it warrants the predication of characteristics.[53] This citation of the text, then, seems not to address the larger implications of the passage with respect to a theory of truth. In the *Madhyamakāvatāra*, however, Candrakīrti adduces the same passage, this time from his own perspective (and not that of an interlocutor). The context for this citation is striking; for Candrakīrti here adduces the passage in response to the question whether there is any sort of *svabhāva* which the Mādhyamika *does* admit.[54] In this context, he quite explicitly assimilates what the scriptural text calls the "nature" (*dharmatā, chos nyid*) of phenomena (*dharmāṇām*) to *svabhāva*,[55] and thus takes this famous passage as an expression of the claim that, in fact, all existents *do* have some sort of "essence" (*svabhāva*).[56]

This is, I suggest, exactly as we should expect, and any suspicion of self-referential incoherence can be dispelled with reference to the kind of theory of types that Griffiths has introduced. Thus, if Candrakīrti's reiteration of Nāgārjuna's claim ("There do not exist, *anywhere at all, any existents whatsoever*, arisen either from themselves or from something else, either from both or altogether without cause") is to count as true, then it must be a claim involving "the second-type set of all universally applicable first-order properties," insofar as its concerning "all existents" necessarily entails its obtaining *always* and *universally*. The *svabhāva* that is denied by Nāgārjuna and Candrakīrti, then,

[53] Thus, he rejoins that this text is of "provisional" meaning, taught "with an eye toward the intentional objects of awareness of those whose conception is obscured by the eye disease which is ignorance" (41.2-3: *kiṃ tarhy avidyātimiropahatamatinayanajñānaviṣayāpekṣayā*).

[54] *Madhyamakāvatāra* (La Vallée Poussin, 1970a: 305-6): *yang ci gang zhig slob dpon gyis bstan bcos las khyad par du mzad pa rnam pa de lta bu'i rang bzhin slob dpon* [La Vallée Poussin's ed. reads *dpan*] *gyi zhal gyis bzhes ba zhig yod dam zhe na.*

[55] *Ibid.*: 306: *chos nyid ces bya ba 'di yang ci zhig / mig la sogs pa 'di dag gi rang bzhin no.*

[56] Note that Candrakīrti's discussion of this passage in the *Madhyamakāvatāra* is (quite appropriately) cited by dGe-lugs-pas in support of their characteristic claim that, in fact, Mādhyamikas do (Nāgārjuna's famous claim to the contrary in the *Vigrahavyāvartanī* notwithstanding) have some sort of "thesis." Cf., e.g., Cabezón 1992: 126, for a translation of Candrakīrti as cited by mKhas-grub-rje.

is of the "first-type set," whereas the *svabhāva* which Candrakīrti affirms in the *Madhyamakāvatāra* is of the "second-type set" – the latter, in other words, is the *abstract state of affairs of there being no svabhāvas* (of the "first-type set"). Indeed, Candrakīrti puts the point exactly this way in his *Yuktiṣaṣṭikāvṛtti*: "The essence of things is their not having any essence."[57] It is perfectly natural that, in the case of the "second-type set," Candrakīrti should retain the same word, and thus characterize such an abstract state of affairs as in some sense *svabhāva*; for a universally obtaining, abstract state of affairs could only be, by definition, non-contingent and independent of any other state of affairs, which is to say "self-existent" (*svabhāva*). As Candrakīrti says in elaborating on the kind of *svabhāva* thus admitted, "It is what is not fabricated and independent of anything else" – and, lest we be in any doubt about its soteriological value, "this intrinsic nature is to be apprehended by awareness that is free of the cataracts of ignorance."[58]

Elsewhere in the *Madhyamakāvatāra*, Candrakīrti says that "Ultimate reality for the Buddhas is *svabhāva* itself."[59] A lengthy passage in the *Prasannapadā* explicitly identifies this "second-type" sense of *svabhāva* with a host of other standard Buddhist terms for the absolute:

> That very thing which is called the nature (*dharmatā*) of phenomena (*dharmāṇām*) is their own character (*tatsvarūpam*). Then what is that nature of phenomena? The essence (*svabhāva*) of phenomena. What is this essence? Nature (*prakṛti*). And what is this nature? Emptiness (*śūnyatā*). What is emptiness? Essencelessness (*naiḥsvābhāvyam*). What is this essencelessness?

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[57] *dngos po'i rang bzhin ni ngo bo nyid med pa yin ....* The Tibetan text is to be found in Scherrer-Schaub 1991: 64; Scherrer-Schaub translates: "La nature propre (*raṅ bzhin*) des entités est de n'avoir pas de nature propre (*ṅo bo ñid med pa*)." (p.218) Here, we can note a similarly "second-type" usage of *svabhāva* in relation to the idea of a Buddha's *dharmakāya* as "*svābhāvikakāya*." Thus, in elaborating the relevant context for understanding the *Abhisamayālaṃkāra*'s references to *svābhāvikakāya*, Makransky (1997) notes a transformation from the idea of a Buddha's *svabhāva* as consisting in an enumerable set of properties, to the idea of this *svabhāva* as the abstract state of affairs (called, among other things, *dharmatā*) that is at the same time just what a Buddha realizes. See, e.g., pp.50-54.

[58] *Madhyamakāvatāra* (La Vallée Poussin 1970a: 306): *'di dag ni bcos ma ma yin pa dang gzhan la bltos pa med pa gang yin pa ste / ma rig pa'i rab rib dang bral ba'i shes pas rtogs par bya ba'i rang gi ngo bo'o*. Note that *bcos ma ma yin pa* (which undoubtedly renders Sanskrit *akṛtrima*) can also (like its Sanskrit antecedent) mean "not fictitious" – with this perhaps being another good text, then, to adduce against the sort of linguistic reading of *prajñapti* favored by Burton.

[59] *Ibid.*: 108: *sangs rgyas rnams kyi don dam pa ni rang bzhin nyid yin zhing*.

> Thusness (*tathatā*). What is thusness? Existing in that way, changelessness, the fact of always abiding constantly (*sadaiva sthāyitā*). For the complete non-arising of things like fire, in virtue of its being independent of anything else and unmade, is called "essence" .... The master [Nāgārjuna] established it as to be known in this way. And the essence of existents (*bhāvānām*), which consists in their not arising, is precisely [their] *lack* of an essence (*asvabhāva*), since, by virtue of its being nothing at all, it simply does not exist. Hence, it is to be known that there exists no essence of existents.[60]

An "essence" (*svabhāva*), then, is not, on this analysis, the kind of thing that existents might have had, but happen not to; rather, it is a fundamentally incoherent idea, such that "essencelessness" is, as Jay Garfield has aptly put it, "the only possible analysis of existence."[61] But insofar as this fact is thought universally (*sarvaśas*) to obtain, the abstract state of affairs of there being no such thing as "essences" thus becomes, in a sense, the "essence" of existents. Here, then, we have a compelling instance in which Candrakirti seems quite clearly to characterize his own position as involving a properly *metaphysical* claim – which is as much as to say that Candrakirti argues that there is a universally obtaining, abstract state of affairs which characterizes everything that exists.[62]

Emphasizing that this second-order sort of *svabhāva* consists in a definitively *abstract* state of affairs, Candrakirti says in the *Madhyamakāvatāra*: "Only what is not to

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[60] *Prasannapadā* 264.11-265.8 (omitting the reiteration, at 265.6, of *MMK* 15.2a-b): *yā sā dharmāṇāṃ dharmatā nāma saiva tatsvarūpaṃ / atha keyaṃ dharmāṇāṃ dharmatā? Dharmāṇāṃ svabhāvaḥ / Ko 'yaṃ svabhāvaḥ? Prakṛtiḥ / Kā ceyaṃ prakṛtiḥ? Yeyaṃ śūnyatā / Keyaṃ śūnyatā? Naiḥsvābhāvyaṃ / Kiṃ idaṃ naiḥsvābhāvyaṃ? Tathatā / Keyaṃ tathatā? Tathābhāvo 'vikāritvaṃ sadaiva sthāyitā / <u>sarvaśa</u>-anutpāda* [per de Jong] *eva hy agnyādināṃ paranirapekṣatvād akṛtrimatvāt svabhāva ity ucyate.... iti vyavasthāpayāmbabhūvur ācāryā iti vijñeyaṃ // Sa caiṣa bhāvānāṃ anutpādātmakaḥ svabhāvo 'kiṃcittvena-abhāvamātratvād asvabhāva eveti kṛtvā nāsti bhāvasvabhāva iti vijñeyaṃ.*

[61] Garfield 1995: 148.

[62] This interpretation clearly cuts against a great many interpretations of Madhyamaka, but it is, I suggest, warranted by Nāgārjuna's own works, as well as other predecessors to Candrakirti. Thus, for example, Buddhapālita urges that "The teacher, having a compassionate nature and seeing that beings are afflicted by various sufferings, *wished to teach the real state* (*yāthātathya* [=Tib. *ji lta ba nyid*] *of entities* (*bhāva*) *in order to liberate them*.... What is the real state of entities? [Their] lack of intrinsic nature." (Tibetan text in Walleser 1970: 3: *slob dpon thugs rje'i bdag nyid can gyis sems can rnams sdrug bsngal sna tshogs kyis nyen par gzigs nas de dag rnam par grol bar bya ba'i phyir dngos po rnams kyi yang dag pa ji lta ba nyid rab tu bstan par bzhed pa.... dngos po rnams kyi yang dag pa ji lta ba nyid gang yin? bshad ba / ngo bo nyid med pa nyid de..* Again, "The teacher [Nāgārjuna] taught them [i.e., ordinary people] the essence (*svabhāva*) which is dependent origination." (*Ibid.*: 5: *de dag la rten cing 'brel par 'byung ba'i ngo bo nyid rab tu bstan pa'i phyir slob dpon gyis rigs pa dang lung sngon du btang ba 'di brtsams so.*) Paul Williams rightly notes that, despite the prevalence of such passages, they cut against what are nevertheless some prominent interpretations of Madhyamaka – as, e.g., the postmodernist interpretation advanced in the lengthy introduction to Huntington 1989; cf., Williams 1991: 205. It should be clear that they also cut against interpretations such as that of Burton (1999); cf., n.68, below.

be seen by spiritually immature persons counts as *svabhāva*. Simply by virtue of that, ultimate truth is not an *entity* or a *non-entity*, since it is essentially tranquil."[63] The same point is made vis-à-vis the question of how this second-order essence is to be taught: "Therefore, having taught conventional truth in this way, one who desires to teach ultimate truth cannot teach it as an 'entity' (*dngos po*; Skt. *vastu* or *bhāva*), since it is inexpressible, and because of its not being an object (*yul*; Skt. *viṣaya*) of awareness. Rather, he adduces examples for those desirous of hearing, so they can illuminate its essence by themselves in experience."[64] Particularly these last two passages can help us in addressing what is sure to be a pressing question at this point: if the emptiness (or essencelessness) of phenomena is, in a sense, their "essence," then what are we to make of the well-known Mādhyamika pronouncements regarding the "emptiness of emptiness"? That is, if (as I am suggesting) the fact of Candrakīrti's making a properly metaphysical claim is warranted in part by his appeal to a second-order sense of *svabhāva* (i.e., by his explicitly claiming that there *is* a "way things are"), is this not undermined by his characteristic insistence that emptiness itself is "empty"? In the terms introduced by Griffiths, it must be the case that the "second-type set of all universally applicable first-order properties" – even where the chief first-order property in question is *impermanence* – is itself *permanent*. Doesn't the claim that emptiness itself is empty amount precisely to a denial of this?

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[63] La Vallée Poussin 1970a: 308: *gang zhig byis pa'i skye bos blta bar bya ba ma yin pa de nyid ni rang bzhin du rigs na / de tsam gyis te / de ni rang bzhin gyis zhi ba nyid kyi phyir ro zhes bya ba 'di yin no.*

[64] *Ibid.*: 109: *de'i phyir de ltar kun rdzob kyi bden pa bstan nas / don dam pa'i bden pa bstan par 'dod pas de ni brjod du med pa'i phyir dang shes pa'i yul ma yin pa nyid kyi phyir dngos su bstan par mi nus pas / nyan par 'dod pa rnams la rang gis myong ba nyid du de'i rang bzhin gsal bar bya ba'i phyir dpe bshad pa.* The lengthy passage from the *Prasannapadā* (nn.41, ff., above) occurs in the context of Candrakīrti's commentary on *MMK* 15.2c-d (*akṛtrimaḥ svabhāvo hi nirapekṣaḥ paratra ca*). Candrakīrti quotes this *kārikā* in the *Madhyamakāvatāra* just before the exchange cited above at n.55. These passages are the subject of an excellent article by William Ames (1982), and much of my present discussion owes a debt to Ames. Cf., also, Huntington 1983, which has some useful discussion of some of these passages; and the Appendix to Burton 1999 (pp.213-220).

Here, perhaps paradoxically, there seems to me to be a useful parallel with some of Martin Heidegger's characteristic remarks regarding his central category of "being." Thus, Heidegger finds it problematic to consider "being" as something that *is*, and he concentrates at several points on the point that, in fact, no *thing* answering to the description "being" could ever be *found*. Where, for example, is the "being" of a building? "For after all it *is*. The building *is*. If anything belongs to this existent, it is its being; yet we do not find the being inside it." And again, "being remains unfindable, almost like nothing, or ultimately *quite* so."[65] In other words, *being* is not some existent *property* that belongs to existents, not a *thing* we could encounter; rather, it refers to something like the fundamental *condition of the possibility* of anything.[66] Something like the same point, it seems to me, is in play in the characteristically dGe-lugs-pa interpretation of the "emptiness of emptiness," as stated, for example, by Tsong-kha-pa's follower mKhas-grub-rje: the "emptiness of emptiness" consists in the fact that no *thing*, no "fact of not-existing," can be found which is an object's "emptiness"; for "a phenomenon's not being verified by a certain valid cognition does not imply that that valid cognition perceives that phenomenon to be nonexistent."[67]

This is, I submit, precisely the point Candrakīrti has here made when he says that "ultimate truth is neither an entity nor a non-entity" (*don dam pa dngos po ma yin zhing dngos po med pa yang ma yin*), and that "one desiring to teach ultimate truth is unable to teach it as an 'entity,' since it is inexpressible, and since it is not an object of awareness"

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[65] Heidegger 1959: 33, 35. I have taken the liberty of changing translator Ralph Manheim's "essent" (which renders Heidegger's *Seiende*) to "existent."

[66] To put it this way is, of course, to suggest reading some of Heidegger's claims as transcendental arguments. In fact, it seems to me that Heidegger's *being* is best understood as something transcendental to existents, though Heidegger's ways of talking about it do not, as far as I am aware, involve anything like the kinds of arguments that I am characterizing as "transcendental." Nevertheless, it can only be the case that it is as a precondition of all existents that the question of being is, as Heidegger says, "necessarily implicit in every question." (1959: 6) However, the understanding of Heidegger's being as a "transcendental" condition seems to me to compromised by some of Heidegger's characteristic (and problematic) claims regarding, for example, the privileged access to *being* which some languages (Greek, German) are alleged to have.

[67] Translated in Cabezón 1992: 100.

(*don dam pa'i bden pa bstan par 'dod pas de ni brjod du med pa'i phyir dang shes pa'i yul ma yin pa nyid kyi phyir dngos su bstan par mi nus pa*). That is, to say that emptiness itself is "empty" is simply to say that emptiness is not a *svabhāva of the first-type set* – it is not, that is, a predicable *property* whose existence could conceivably be encountered by awareness. It is not, as Candrakīrti here puts it, an "entity" or "thing" (*dngos po*; Sanskrit *vastu* or *bhāva*); rather, it is (as I have been urging) an abstract state of affairs, a "second-type" metaphysical predicate. Claims regarding the "emptiness of emptiness," then, are simply meant to undermine any reification of emptiness, any inclination to see it as the kind of first-order property that might be what "really" exists in place of what seems to us to exist; as Candrakīrti himself puts it, "it is explained for the sake of reversing attachment to the idea of emptiness as an entity."[68] This does not, however, in any way undermine the notion that emptiness can (and does) function as a *svabhāva of the second-type set* – that is, as denoting the abstract state of affairs of there being no essences.

That this abstract state of affairs should specifically *not* be understood as a *property* of existents seems to me to be the upshot of another interesting passage from the *Prasannapadā* – one that slightly precedes the above passage in which Candrakīrti explicitly affirms that *svabhāva* can be retained in the context of talk about the absolute. Here, Candrakīrti anticipates the charge that, insofar as it is a "property" (*dharma*) of existents, emptiness counts as their *svabhāva*. Thus, he attributes to an interlocutor the following line of reasoning:

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[68] *Madhyamakāvatāra* 6.185c-d-186 (La Vallée Poussin 1970a: 310-11): *stong nyid ces bya'i stong nyid gang / stong nyid stong nyid du 'dod de / stong nyi dngos pa'i blo can gyi / 'dzin pa bzlog phyir gsungs ba yin*. Incredibly, Burton (1999) adduces this passage as evidence for his interpretation of Madhyamaka – an interpretation that he can only advance by way of a tortured insertion. Thus, he comments: "If the mind's activity of conceptual construction did not occur, there would be no entities, and hence no true nature *of* entities. I suspect that this is the meaning of Candrakīrti's declaration, in the *MA*, of the 'emptiness of emptiness' (*stong nyid stong nyid=śūnyatāśūnyatā*). As Candrakīrti says, the teaching of the emptiness of emptiness opposes (*bzlog*) the (wrong) apprehension of emptiness as a *dngos po* (=*bhāva*) – a *dngos po* being, in my judgment, here a 'mind-independent existent')." (1999: 68) The supposition that Candrakīrti must here mean by *dngos po* specifically a "mind-independent" entity is wholly unjustified, as the passage much more straightforwardly makes perfectly good sense on the reading I propose.

> That existent (*bhāva*) which is without essence (*asvabhāva*) does not exist. And you accept the property (*dharma*) of existents called 'emptiness.' And if the property-possessor (*dharmin*) does not exist [i.e., since it's empty], it makes no sense that there be a property instantiated in that (*tadāśrito dharma*); for it doesn't make sense that there be some skin-color with respect to the non-existent son of a barren woman. Therefore, existents *do* have an essence.[69]

This passage is Candrakīrti's *avatarana* to Nāgārjuna's *MMK* 13.4a-b, which thus represents the challenge of an interlocutor: "If there is no essence, what could change belong to?"[70] Nāgārjuna's next half-verse then represents something like the same kind of succinct transcendental argument we saw in *MMK* 24.20.[71] Thus, he turns the tables and urges that it is only *because* of emptiness that change is possible, thus positing emptiness as a condition of the possibility of the undisputed fact that things change.[72] Candrakīrti explains this in terms similar to the passages (considered above) in which he disallowed even the conventional sense of *svabhāva*. Thus, he considers that if the heat of fire is conventionally designated as its "essence" *due to its not varying*, then there is no explaining how fires cool off.[73]

Here as elsewhere, then, Candrakīrti simply dismisses the conventional sense of *svabhāva* as incoherent, thus refusing that the "emptiness" of existents could count as the kind of "property" (*dharma*) which is conventionally called an "essence" (*svabhāva*). And yet, in just a little over twenty pages (i.e., in the passages previously considered), he will assert that emptiness *is*, in fact, equivalent to the *svabhāva* of phenomena – which, in

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[69] 240.9-11: *Yo hy asvabhāvo bhāvaḥ sa nāsti; bhāvānāṃ ca śūnyatā nāma dharma iṣyate. Na ca-asati dharmiṇi tadāśrito dharma upapadyate; na hy asati bandhyātanaye tacchyāmatā-upapadyate iti; tasmād asty eva bhāvānāṃ svabhāva iti.*

[70] *kasya syād anyathābhāvaḥ svabhāś cen na vidyate.*

[71] Cf., n.5, above.

[72] *kasya syād anyathābhāvaḥ svabhāvo yadi vidyate.*

[73] 241.7-12: *Iha yo dharmo yaṃ padārthaṃ na vyabhicarati sa tasya svabhāva iti vyapadiśyate, aparapratibaddhatvāt; agner auṣṇyaṃ hi loke tadavyabhicāritvāt svabhāva ity ucyate. Tad eva-auṣṇyam apsu-upalabhyamānaṃ parapratyayasaṃbhūtatvāt kṛtrimatvān na svabhāva iti; yadā ca-evam avyabhicāriṇā svabhāvena bhavitavyaṃ, tadā-asya-avyabhicāritvād anyathābhāvaḥ syād abhāvaḥ; na hy agneḥ śaityaṃ pratipadyate; evaṃ bhāvānāṃ sati svabhāvābhyupagame 'nyathātvam eva na saṃbhavet. Upalabhyate ca-eṣām anyathātvam ato nāsti svabhāvaḥ.*

turn, is equivalent to their "nature" (*dharmatā*). I would argue that the best way to reconcile the prima facie contradiction between these passages is to read the passage we have just read as particularly concerned with the idea of emptiness as a *property* belonging to existents. Thus, it matters that Candrakīrti's interlocutor here presents him with the idea that "what is called the emptiness of existents" (*bhāvānāṃ ca śūnyatā nāma*) might be "admitted as a property" (*dharma iṣyate*), such that "existents" are the "property-possessor" (*dharmin*) with respect to it.. In other words, what the interlocutor here presents is the idea that emptiness must be what Griffiths characterizes as one of the "first-type set" of properties, and that it can therefore be called an "essence" (*svabhāva*) *in the conventional sense* – that is, in the sense of an ontological correlate of an existent's defining property. Hence, Candrakīrti refuses this idea by arguing, in a familiar way, that this idea of *svabhāva* is simply incoherent.

In contrast, Candrakīrti can himself characterize emptiness (and *dharmatā*, etc.) as in some sense the "essence" (*svabhāva*) of phenomena (*dharmāṇām*) only insofar as he here has in mind a second-order sort of "essence" – that is, an abstract state of affairs of the sort that constitutes a properly metaphysical predicate, which is not the sort of thing we could ever *encounter*, not the sort of thing available to *a posteriori* justification.[74] Again, then, we have a first-order statement ("everything is empty," *sarve*

[74] This idea, it seems to me, is reflected in, *inter alia*, the *maṅgala* verse to Nāgārjuna's *MMK*, as understood by Candrakīrti. Thus, Nāgārjuna precedes his *kārikās* with this: "I praise the best of teachers, the perfect Buddha, who taught auspicious (*śiva*) dependent origination, which is ceaseless and non-arising, without interruption and without permanence, having neither multiple meanings nor a single meaning, neither coming nor going" (La Vallée Poussin 1970b: 11.13-16: *anirodham anutpādam anucchedam aśāśvatam / anekārtham anānārtham anāgamam anirgamam / yaḥ pratītyasamutpādaṃ prapañcopaśamaṃ śivaṃ / deśayāmāsa sambuddhas taṃ vande vadatāṃ varam*). One way to get a handle on the point of this is to contrast my translation (and Candrakīrti's commentary) with the translation offered by Richard Hayes (1988: 53): "I pay homage to the finest of speakers, who being fully awakened showed happiness as not coming to an end... [etc.], but as dependent origination, the quelling of vain thinking." Thus, Hayes takes *śivam* as a substantive ("happiness"), and as one of two direct objects of the verb (*deśayāmāsa*) – and accordingly, takes the various "characteristics" (ceaseless, non-arising, etc.) as predicated *of 'happiness'*. As Candrakīrti's commentary makes clear, however, *śiva* (which I have rendered "auspicious") is simply one among the characteristics predicated *of dependent origination*. (See, e.g., *Prasannapadā* 11.9-11, which explains the sense in which *pratītyasamutpāda* is to be considered "*śiva*", and concludes, before restating the verse itself: *yathābhihitaviśeṣaṇasya pratītyasamutpādasya deśanākriyayā ipsitatamatvāt*, "since what is maximally desired from the teaching is dependent origination, *as thus characterized*"). Candrakīrti then makes clear (in the course of his engagement with Dignāga) that the list of mutually exclusive "characteristics" thus predicated of dependent origination is meant precisely to convey the sense

bhāvāḥ śūnyāḥ), the subject of which is "everything" (*sarve bhāvāḥ*); and then we have a second-order statement, i.e., a statement *about* the first-order statement: "*the fact that* everything is empty is permanent." The subject of the second-order statement is an abstract state of affairs ("the fact *that* everything is empty"). It is insofar as the first-order statement is universal in scope ("*everything, sarve bhāvāḥ*, is empty") that the second-order statement *necessarily* follows (at least if the first-order statement is to count as true). And that, finally, is what I mean in characterizing this as a "metaphysical predicate": a first-order statement of universal scope which, insofar as such is its scope, necessarily entails a second-order statement involving the mode of universality.

In an illuminating article entitled "The Notion of *Svabhāva* in the Thought of Candrakīrti," William Ames draws what seems to me the same conclusion:

> Thus the statement that *svabhāva* does not exist means that none of the qualities of things can be their *svabhāva*, since things, and therefore all their qualities, are contingent and dependent on causes and conditions. Now Candrakīrti observes that the fact that things are without *svabhāva* is, itself, invariably true and thus non-contingent. . . . [*Svabhāva* in the second sense] is not a quality of things, but a fact about qualities of things, namely, that none of them are *svabhāva*.[75]

What I am particularly arguing now is that we can make the best sense of this apparent equivocation – indeed, that we can understand it as following naturally – if we understand Candrakīrti to be making transcendental arguments.[76] In particular, I am

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that *nothing* can finally be predicated of it, and that this is in fact the entire point of Nāgārjuna's treatise: "Now the remainder of the treatise is undertaken for the sake of refuting whatever characteristics are imputed anywhere. Dependent origination does not have any irreducible (*niravaśeṣa*) property, not even such as goer, destination, or motion – (this treatise is undertaken) for the sake of proving (this)" (58.11-13: *Idānīṃ kva cid yaḥ kaścid viśeṣo 'dhyāropitas tadviśeṣāpākaraṇārthaṃ śeṣaprakaraṇārambhaḥ. Gantṛgantavyagamanādiko 'pi niravaśeṣo viśeṣo nāsti pratītyasamutpādasyeti pratipādanārthaṃ*; cf., Appendix II, n.9). Contra Hayes, then, Nāgārjuna's treatise is framed by a *maṅgala* verse that is meant to emphasize that nothing can finally be said about what he takes to be the most important principle – which is basically to emphasize, I am now suggesting, that *pratītyasamutpāda* is an essentially *metaphysical* predicate, denoting an abstract state of affairs such as cannot be justified *a posteriori*.

[75] Ames 1982: 173-4. For every occurrence of "qualities" here, we could easily substitute "properties" to achieve the emphasis I am urging.

[76] In characterizing Candrakīrti's as an apparent "equivocation" on the word *svabhāva*, I do not mean to pick out the same move that Hayes (1994) criticizes in Nāgārjuna. Thus, Hayes's contention is that Nāgārjuna's arguments depend on equivocating between *svabhāva* in the sense of "causal independence," and in the sense of "identity," with the equivocation being most clear to Hayes at *MMK* 1.5 (*na hi svabhāvo bhāvānāṃ pratyayādiṣu vidyate / avidyamāne svabhāve parabhāvo na vidyate //*). This passage, says Hayes, makes two statements: First, "Surely beings have no *causal independence* when they have causal

suggesting that a transcendental *condition of the possibility* of something is, like Heidegger's *Being*, logically distinct from the kinds of *properties* that can be predicated of it. Thus, it is not really the case that Candrakīrti uses the word in two different *senses*, so much as that he uses it with respect to two different levels of analysis. The second-order usage, that is, still involves the same *definition* (viz., that of being independent of any other state of affairs), but simply applies this to the case of an abstract metaphysical predicate rather than to experienceable properties.

With this point in mind, I would suggest a Mādhyamika revision of Griffiths's appeal to a theory of types. Recall that Griffiths adduces as an example of a "first-order property" the fact of "being impermanent." On his account, properties such as this are instantiated in "*first-type existents*" (my emphasis), which are the bearers of these first-order properties. "*They are the reals, the dharmas*" (my emphasis). But this is, of course, precisely the kind of analysis that Candrakīrti refuses. On Candrakīrti's reading, that is, there *are* no "reals" or "dharmas," where such are thought to be the independently existent "bearers" of properties. And this is, I suggest, why Candrakīrti particularly has a problem with the idea that emptiness might be said to be a "property" (*dharma*) that is admitted as belonging to some "property-possessor" (*dharmin*); for any such talk of "property" and "property-possessor" (or "characteristic" and "thing characterized," etc.) is already encompassed, already *made possible*, by the prior fact of emptiness – i.e., given Candrakīrti's understanding of emptiness, by the prior fact of its being both possible and necessary for things to exist in relation to one another. Thus, to say that emptiness is a *condition of the possibility* of, say, the Four Noble Truths, is to say something much more than (and something logically distinct from) saying that emptiness

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conditions." Second, "And if there is no *identity*, then there is no *difference*" (with Hayes's contention being that, in the second statement, "causal independence" doesn't make any sense as a translation for *svabhāva*). Thus: "The problem that now arises is this: no matter how much sense statement 2 may make as an independent statement, it does not at all follow from statement 1." (1994: 312-13) But it seems to me that if we render *svabhāva* as "essence," this less clearly involves equivocation. In any case, Candrakīrti's prima facie equivocation instead involves different orders of analysis.

is a *property* which may be *predicated* of them. Indeed, it does not even seem right to me to say that emptiness is a *necessary* property of existents, and that it is distinguished in this way from any other, contingent properties they might have; rather, to speak of it as a *condition of the possibility* of existents is somehow to *encompass* the very fact of predicating properties in the first place. That is, to say that emptiness is *transcendental* to existents is, it seems to me, to say that existents can only *have* properties (and that we can only *predicate* them) because they are already empty. Robert Stern makes essentially the same point with respect to Aristotle's Principle of Non-Contradiction, considered as one possible example of a transcendental claim:

> It is possible to argue that Aristotle's intention was to establish this proposition as one that must be accepted for any belief to rationalize any other, and thus for a coherent belief-system to exist at all. On this view, a transcendental argument is needed because the aim is to establish, not that the Principle is *itself* a reason for believing anything, but is something we are required to believe if what we believe is to be a reason for believing anything else.... it is not because this belief figures *directly* as a reason for making such judgements ...; rather, it is arguably more like a necessary presupposition for making cogent the reasons we do use....[77]

I would, then, qualify Griffiths's point about "metaphysical predicates," and venture the following conclusion: Candrakīrti, many contemporary interpreters notwithstanding, should be understood as making properly *metaphysical* claims – claims, that is, that are universal in scope. Moreover, his particular metaphysical claims involve what is finally a *transcendental* claim: emptiness is a condition of the possibility of all existents, and of any analysis thereof. As such, it is not a property these happen to have (or even a property they *necessarily* have); rather, it is the abstract state of affairs that must obtain if any relations between properties and property-possessors are to be at all possible. Thus, Candrakīrti can refuse that emptiness counts as a "property" (*dharma*) of

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[77] Stern 2000: 197. It seems to me that Heidegger's *Being* functions in a similar way. With regard to the logically distinct character of transcendental claims, Stern muses: "... in claiming that *X* is a necessary condition for the possibility of experience, we are not taking this to be a matter of causal or natural necessity... must we also accept that its necessity is grounded only in what is logically possible (making it analytic in the ontological sense), or can this form of conceptual analysis give us insight into modal truths that constitute neither natural nor logical constraints, but something in between, such as metaphysical limitations on what is possible?" (2000: 8-9)

existents, on the same grounds based on which he refuses even the conventional understanding of "essence" (*svabhāva*); and yet at the same time, assert that as a second-order, abstract state of affairs, the fact of existents' lacking essences, insofar as it is *true*, nevertheless constitutes the "essence" of existents. Finally, he can (as we have seen) think that the Buddhist Epistemologist's demands for epistemic justification are misplaced insofar as that very demand compromises what is, for Candrakīrti, precisely the content of his transcendental claim: to the extent that their existing interdependently is a condition of the possibility of all existents (as of any analysis thereof), the demand for the kind of independently valid perspective *on* existents which is alleged to disclose what is ultimately more real *behind* them is simply incoherent. This is, then, why Candrakīrti can make the move with which he concludes his engagement with the Epistemologist: that is, the move from insisting that *pramāṇas* and *prameyas* are "established in dependence upon one another" (*parasparāpekṣayā sidhyanti*) – which is to say that "it is emphatically *not* the case that the establishment of reliable warrants and their objects is essential" (*no tu khalu svābhāvikī pramāṇaprameyayoḥ siddhir*) – to the conclusion that we ought therefore to "let the mundane be just as it is seen" (*tasmāl laukikam eva-astu yathādṛṣṭam*). The latter conclusion follows naturally from the former precisely insofar as Candrakīrti's properly metaphysical claim is that there *is* nothing more real than dependently originated conventions.

5.iv. Transcendental arguments assessed: The ethical nature of Candrakīrti's project

We have now surveyed many passages in which, I suggest, Candrakīrti makes clear that his is a properly *metaphysical* claim. These passages present, I submit, serious difficulties for other prominent interpretations of Madhyamaka, many of which find it hard to account for the fact that (as Paul Williams noted in adducing some of these

passages contra the postmodernist interpretation of C. W. Huntington) "it is clear that for Candrakīrti the *paramārtha* is real not just because it is liberating and is valuable, but because it is truly the way things really are."[78] We are, I have been arguing, better able to account for this fact if we understand Candrakīrti to have been making transcendental arguments; for on such a reconstruction, Candrakīrti's critique of the Buddhist Epistemologist in fact relates quite coherently with Candrakīrti's other, more characteristic arguments concerning emptiness, such that the refusal of his interlocutor's demands represents not (as many scholars seem to have assumed) a negligible tangent in the *Prasannapadā*, but rather, a move that is coherent with (and possibly required by) what are thought to be Candrakīrti's more characteristic concerns – which turn out to be properly *metaphysical* concerns, such as require transcendental arguments for their justification. This reconstruction of Candrakīrti's project thus has the advantage of encompassing several prima facie disparate parts of Candrakīrti's corpus – the engagement with the Epistemologist, arguments that everything is empty of *svabhāva*, arguments that emptiness *is* the *svabhāva* of everything – and rendering them coherent.

There remain, nevertheless, both exegetical and philosophical reasons to have reservations about my proposed reconstruction. Exegetically, we must still address the question of what Candrakīrti can mean in extolling the ultimate as radically "other" (as, for example, "a matter of venerable silence") if, as I have argued, his final claim is that the ultimate truth is in a sense that there *is* no ultimate truth. Philosophically, we would do well to address some of the concerns that have been raised with respect to transcendental arguments in recent philosophical literature. I would like to conclude this chapter, then, by scouting these issues, and by suggesting how our attempts to address such reservations might be related to one another; for the philosophical issue turns out to have chiefly to do with what is claimed for transcendental arguments, while the

[78] Williams 1991: 205; cf., Chapter 4, n.111.

exegetical issue turns on Candrakirti's fundamentally *ethical* conception of the Buddhist project – in which case, what is claimed for his arguments finally presupposes his uncompromising commitment to the compassion of the Buddha. Let us, then, address these issues in turn.

The state of the field with respect to transcendental arguments has been very well mapped in the recent monograph by Robert Stern (2000). As Stern notes, most of the major lines of objection to transcendental arguments were sketched in an influential article by Barry Stroud (1968). Stroud's most influential objection is that transcendental arguments turn out to presuppose some version of verificationism. This contention is developed in two stages: first, it is argued that the skeptic can grant that *S* is in a sense a condition of the possibility of *X* (say, language), but still insist "that it is enough to make language possible if we *believe* that *S* is true, or if it looks for all the world as if it is, but that *S* needn't actually be true"[79]; thus, it is then argued that if we are to bridge the gap between merely needing to *believe* it is true, and its really *being* true, it must be possible to determine the truth or falsity of *S*. Hence, the need to fall back on some version of verificationism. But if such recourse is really necessary, then transcendental arguments turn out to be superfluous; for "verificationism has sufficient anti-sceptical strength to refute scepticism on its own; and verificationism is a highly contestable position, which the sceptic can easily question."[80]

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[79] Stroud (1968), quoted by Stern 2000: 44-5.

[80] Stern 2000: 45. This line of objection is also succinctly summarized in the brief article by Grayling (1992). Cf., also, Rorty 1971. This line of argument is clearly related to one of the other arguments considered by Stern (following Stroud), viz., the *idealism* objection – that is, "... we can argue from the fact that the world must conform to particular conditions in order to be experienceable by us, but we *do not* have to hold (with Kant) that *the way in which the world meets these conditions* is through any constitutive activity on our part" (Stern 2000: 51). Among other things, this objection seems to me (as it does to Stern) to be based on a highly misleading characterization of Kant, according to which, "Kant ... made the features that make objects experienceable by us into conditions on their existence per se, and so treated them in an idealist fashion." (*Ibid.*: 53) But as Stern agrees, such is precisely the sort of move that Kant is frequently at pains to pre-empt; cf., inter alia, *Critique of Pure Reason*, A27/B43, and A63/B88. Be that as it may, the Mādhyamika collapsing of *upādāya prajñapti* and *pratītyasamutpāda* may represent an interesting move with regard to this possible objection.

Stern's principal strategy with respect to this objection is to propose that transcendental arguments can be variously understood as truth-directed, belief-directed, experience-directed, or concept-directed.[81] This typology is then deployed together with an examination of whether the skepticism addressed by various examples of transcendental arguments is (as we have seen) best understood as *epistemic* skepticism, or as some version of *justificatory* skepticism. Stern thus argues that *truth*-directed transcendental arguments may well be the only kind that would, if valid, meet the challenge of epistemic skepticism, but that such are also the most vulnerable to objections such as Stroud's. Varieties of *justificatory* skepticism, on the other hand, might adequately be met by transcendental arguments of the other three types. If, for example, one is challenged to show that one's beliefs are (independent of whether we are in a position to know they are *true*) rationally held, one can satisfactorily circumvent this challenge by way of a transcendental argument which shows that we *necessarily* hold the belief in question. Accordingly, much of Stern's attention is devoted to arguing that the instances of skepticism famously addressed by transcendental arguments (e.g., the challenges of Hume, as answered by Kant) are, in fact, best understood as instances of *justificatory* skepticism, such that we are entitled to read the transcendental arguments which address them as among the more "modest" sort that are not vulnerable to Stroud's objections. Thus, Stern concludes that "[t]he lesson from this investigation is therefore that only when used against normativist justificatory scepticism can a positive role for transcendental arguments of a modest kind be found."[82] (Among the "positive roles" he thus finds is the diagnostic role performed in having clarified just what kind of skepticism we are up against.)

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[81] Stern 2000: 10-11.

[82] *Ibid.*: 123.

While it is possible to imagine stronger defenses of transcendental arguments, I am willing to grant this point and see where it leads us.[83] What is perhaps most interesting about the standard lines of objection to transcendental arguments is that they point out reasons for the likely *dialectical* failure of such arguments. That is, transcendental arguments are unlikely to *persuade* someone who does not already admit that, say, the necessity of our *believing* something (if such can be demonstrated) entails its likely being *true* – in which case, we are no better off than if we had at our disposal only the kind of effective verificationist arguments (if such are possible) that could demonstrate the latter. More generally, they are unlikely to achieve the kind of rhetorical success that would seem to be commensurate with the peculiar degree of certainty that is sometimes claimed for them; for insofar as transcendental arguments characteristically trade on the mode of *necessity*, it would seem that we are asked to believe that "if the person refuses to accept the conclusion, he *dies*."[84] Clearly, transcendental arguments have typically not (any more than any other arguments) achieved such coercive success, and Stroud's objection is basically to the effect that, if such success (in the form of the

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[83] A stronger argument is made, for example, by Gamwell (1990), who anticipates objections similar to those of Stroud: "But this argument against transcendental thought depends upon the claim that all such thought is a quest for certainty, and we may now ask whether this claim should be accepted. In response, it might be said that certainty is precisely the putative distinction of transcendental understanding. In contrast to factual or logically contingent claims, a priori claims are said to be logically necessary and, in that sense, invariable or certain. But the question is whether this logical meaning of certainty is the same certainty as that whose achievement is inconsistent with human fallibility. A defense of transcendental understanding might further distinguish between *logical* and *epistemological* certainty, such that understandings claiming to be logically certain are also epistemologically fallible, and only epistemological certainty is impossible.... I claim logical necessity, and I concede epistemological uncertainty. The affirmation of fallibility is not a statement about the condition that I take to be transcendental, namely, that it has an alternative; this affirmation is rather a claim about the claimer, namely, that I may be wrong." (1990: 93, 107-8) Again: "Perhaps it will be objected that we can never get beyond what we think is conceivable in order to identify what is in truth conceivable. But to say that this circumstance discredits the distinction is to say that there is no distinction between what we think and what is true...." (*Ibid.*: 106) As we will see, though, this response nevertheless pertains to the conclusion I am drawing about the conditions for the *dialectical* success of transcendental arguments.

[84] This concludes Robert Nozick's caricature of the sort of thing that philosophical arguments are often thought to aim at, and is quoted by Griffiths (1998: 183). Cf., Lewis Carroll's "What the Tortoise Said to Achilles" (Carroll 1895): Achilles, faced with the Tortoise's persistence in thinking that the rule of *modus ponens* itself requires justification before being convinced of the conclusion to such an argument, says with exasperation: "'Then Logic would take you by the throat, and *force* you to do it!' Achilles triumphantly replied. 'Logic would tell you 'You can't help yourself. Now that you've accepted A and B and C and D, you *must* accept Z!' So you've got no choice, you see." (reprinted in Carroll n.d.: 1229)

kind of apodictic certainty that would satisfy even the epistemic skeptic) is desired, then something further is required. What Stern's concession amounts to, then, is that transcendental arguments can at most aim at showing that it is *rational to believe* the conclusions in which they issue, but that they can never achieve the kind of dialectical success that would seem to be promised by an argument from necessity (which would, that is, persuade all comers that the conclusions in which they issue are *true*). Indeed, Stern moderates even this conclusion, saying with respect to some forms of transcendental argument that "if we treat transcendental arguments in a modest manner, and in particular if we take them to have a belief-directed form, some appeal to coherence as a legitimate ground for belief will be required, if any satisfactory response to the justificatory sceptic using a belief-directed transcendental argument is to be achieved."[85]

How does it stand, then, with Candrakīrti? Might we similarly wish to read his transcendental arguments as of the modest, belief-directed sort favored by Stern? This might seem to be a high cost to pay, since Candrakīrti surely held that his arguments issued in conclusions that were *true*. Gamwell has, to be sure, persuasively argued that it is not contradictory to consider transcendental claims as true, while yet holding that *epistemological* certainty is impossible,[86] and we might well pursue such a line of argument in maintaining the truth-directed character of Candrakīrti's arguments. I would like, however, to conclude by surveying some passages from Candrakīrti that evince a striking degree of what we might call *epistemic humility*.

These passages are interesting on a number of levels. They suggest, first of all, that Candrakīrti sets out all of his arguments only in the context of a prior and uncompromising commitment to what he takes to be the Buddhist vision – in which case, it might after all turn out that Candrakīrti's are indeed best construed as *belief*-directed

[85] Stern 2000: 112.

[86] Cf., n.83, above.

arguments, with the beliefs in question being those that he thinks follow particularly from being a Buddhist. In this regard, it is striking that the closest thing to an explicit transcendental argument that I have indicated in Nāgārjuna's works comes in the twenty-fourth chapter of the *Mūlamadhyamakakārikā*, which treats the Four Noble Truths; for it is particularly these teachings of the Buddha that Buddhists will wish to take as indisputably obtaining, such that an argument to the condition of *their* possibility will be compelling particularly to Buddhists (and such that, conversely, any argument that issues in their falsity will be considered, *ipso facto*, false). Moreover, the consideration of Candrakīrti's arguments as crucially presupposing specifically Buddhist beliefs can help us to appreciate the fundamentally *ethical* character of his arguments, and to appreciate how he might appear to extol the ultimate truth as radically apart from the conventional, while yet holding (with Nāgārjuna) that "saṃsāra is in no way distinct from nirvāṇa, and nirvāṇa is in no way distinct from saṃsāra."[87]

The very first verse of Candrakīrti's *Madhyamakāvatāra* specifies that "a compassionate mind, non-dual intellect, and *bodhicitta* are the causes of the sons of the victor."[88] The second then specifies that, out of these, "Before all else I praise compassion."[89] Similarly, the philosophically central sixth chapter begins by urging that Nāgārjuna's teaching is only for one whose "previous meditative cultivation" has "planted the seeds of emptiness in his continuum," and explains the two main mistakes with regard to emptiness: either abandoning it, or taking it to mean nonexistence.[90] The latter is, moreover, finally the more pernicious error, insofar as it particularly undermines

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[87] *MMK* 25.19 (La Vallée Poussin 1970b: 535): *na saṃsārasya nirvāṇāt kiṃ cid asti viśeṣaṇam / na nirvāṇasya saṃsārāt kiṃ cid asti viśeṣaṇam //.*

[88] La Vallée Poussin 1970a: 1: *snying rje'i sems dang gnyis su med blo dang / byang chub sems ni rgyal sras rnams kyi rgyu.*

[89] *Ibid.*: 7: *... thog mar snying rje bstod par bgyi.*

[90] *Ibid.*: 77: *rten cing 'brel par 'byung ba yang dag pa ji lta ba bzhin ston pa'i 'bras bu can gyi bstan bcos de yang sngar goms pas rgyud la stong pa nyid kyi sa bon bzhag pa rnams kho na la bstan par bya'i gzhan dag la ni ma yin te / de dag stong pa nyid nyan par gyur du zin kyang de la log par zhugs pa'i bsam pa dang ldan pa nyid kyi don ma yin pa chen po dang ldan pa'i phyir ro.*

compassionate conduct. And that compassionate conduct is the governing concern here is then made poignantly clear in verses four and five of this chapter:

> The seed of a perfect Buddha's insight exists in the [kind of] person who, having heard about emptiness while a common person, has a welling-up of inward joy, his eyes wet with tears arisen from that great joy, the hairs on his body prickling. Only such a person is a [suitable] vessel for the real teachings, [only] to him should the ultimate truth be taught, [only] he has the qualities that [must] accompany that.[91]

This eminently ethical emphasis on compassion recurs repeatedly in some of Candrakīrti's most characteristic clarifications of what "emptiness" amounts to. Thus, for example, he anticipates the objection that "If everything is empty, then insofar as *nothing* exists, then, since they're included in 'everything,' neither dharma nor non-dharma is possible, together with the desired and undesired results which have these as their cause."[92] Candrakīrti answers:

> It is you, by virtue only of your own imagination, who say that non-existence is the meaning of emptiness; and thus having erroneously projected [your meaning onto us], you say 'if everything is empty, there is neither arising nor destruction'; with such words, you slander us, and, fallen into great distress, cause excessive torment .... But what is adopted by you is not the meaning of emptiness that we have explained in this treatise.[93]

Again and again, Candrakīrti goes to great lengths to explain in this way that "emptiness" does not mean "non-existence"; rather, it functions precisely to *characterize a mode of existence* (indeed, the only mode possible), with this being repeatedly explained precisely in order to emphasize that this position is not only not nihilist, but in fact (on Candrakīrti's view) represents the only way to retain the ethical project of Buddhism.

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[91] *Ibid.*: 78: *so so skye bo'i dus na'ang stong pa nyid thos nas / nang du rab tu dga' ba yang dang yang du 'byung / rab tu dga' ba las byung mchi mas mig brlan zhing / lus kyi ba spu ldan bar gyur pa gang yin pa // de la rdzogs pa'i sangs rgyas blo yi sa bon yod / de nyid nye bar bstan pa'i snod ni de yin te / de la dam pa'i don gyi bden pa bstan par bya / de la de yi rjes su 'gro ba'i yon tan 'byung //.*

[92] *Prasannapadā* 490.1-2: *Yadi sarvam idaṃ śūnyaṃ yadā sarvam eva nāsti tadā sarvāntaḥpātitvād dharmādharmau saha tadhetukena-iṣṭāniṣṭaphalena na saṃbhavataḥ.*

[93] *Ibid.*: 490.8-12: *sa bhavān svavikalpanayaiva nāstitvaṃ śūnyatārtha ity evaṃ viparitam adhyāropya "yadi sarvam idaṃ śūnyam udayo nāsti na vyaya" ityādinopālambhaṃ bruvāṇo 'smāsu mahāntaṃ khedam āpanno 'tiva vihanyate. vividhair abhūtaiḥ parikalpair hanyata ity arthaḥ. na tv ayam asmābhir atra śāstre śūnyatārtha upavarṇito yas tvayā parigṛhitaḥ.*

"For if karma were produced *essentially*, it would be without result – based on endurance, it would permanent, based on destruction it would be annihilation. But when karma does not arise at all, owing to its being empty of essence, then how could there be either endurance *or* destruction, based on which there could be this concern?"[94] "And since karma is without essence, therefore neither the faults which are the unwanted consequence of seeing eternalism *or* nihilism occur for us, who are explaining it in this way."[95]

For Candrakīrti, then, the proper understanding of emptiness is in fact the *only* way to avoid allowing the characteristically reductionist project of Buddhism to become *eliminativist*.[96] Thus, Candrakīrti holds (what is prima facie paradoxical) that it is only to the extent that other Buddhists allow that there exists some irreducible remainder of critical analysis – that is, only to the extent that other Buddhists claim to have reduced the self to some really existent, ontological primitives – that there is a danger of nihilism (*ucchedavāda*); for only on such an account of the reductionist project is the person effectively *replaced* by something else which is what "really" exists. On Candrakīrti's account, in contrast, there is no claim to have reached ontological bedrock, so that there is still a place in the account for the sort of conventionally existent self that we intuitively take to be the subject of ethical effort. On his account, in other words, among the things that our sense of self depends on is *the relative existence of the self* (with "relative" existence, again, being the only kind of existence possible). This, then, is ultimately the guiding impulse behind his rejection of, inter alia, the Buddhist Epistemologist's understanding of *svalakṣaṇas*: "If [an entity exists] in dependence on a *svalakṣaṇa*, then

[94] *Ibid.*: 323.13-15: *Yadi hi karmaṇaḥ svarūpeṇaiva-utpādaḥ syāt, tasya-avipākam avasthānān nityatvaṃ syāt, vināśaād ucchedaḥ syāt; yadā tu karma na-eva-utpadyate svabhāvaśūnyatvāt, tadā tasya kuto 'vasthānaṃ vināśo vā yata eṣā cittā syāt.*

[95] *Ibid.*: 326.10-11: *Yataś ca niḥsvabhāvaṃ karma tasmāc chāśvatocchedadarśanaprasaṅgadoṣo na-eva-asmākam evaṃ vyācakṣamāṇānām āpadyate iti.*

[96] Cf., Chapter 4, n.123.

through negation of that [*svalakṣaṇa*] the entity would be destroyed, and emptiness would be the cause of its destruction."[97]

All of this is simply to underscore the fact that Candrakīrti understands his approach not only as not being nihilist, but precisely as being the *most* ethically viable way to prosecute the Buddhist reductionist project. And to underscore that is, in turn, to emphasize that Candrakīrti's arguments particularly presuppose *that project*. In the final analysis, in other words, it will always be specifically *Buddhist* beliefs to which Candrakīrti's transcendental arguments are directed, and the indisputably obtaining facts which he argues are only possible because of emptiness are most importantly what are facts *for Buddhists* – and paradigmatically, the "Four Noble Truths" (*catvāry āryasatyāni*), the possibility of which Nāgārjuna argues in what is in many ways the culminating chapter of his *Mūlamadhyamakakārikā*. It is therefore significant that some quite striking expressions of epistemic humility from Candrakīrti have finally to do with his ultimate deference to the Buddha. In concluding the *Madhyamakāvatāra*, for example, he says of the Buddha, "how can one such as I even know your qualities, much less expound them? Nevertheless, since the venerable Nāgārjuna explained them, I have said just a little toward the abandonment of doubt."[98]

While such expressions might be dismissed as simply customary rhetorical gestures, there are numerous other indications that Candrakīrti takes certain inheritances from his tradition as paramount, and as beyond question. Thus, for example, Candrakīrti takes it as a matter of faith that ethical actions *do* have relevant consequences: "Thinking that ordinary people who excessively exercise critical reasoning will, based on their rejection of action and its consequences, destroy the conventional, the Bhagavān said that

[97] *Madhyamakāvatāra* 6.34 (La Vallée Poussin 1970a: 117): *gal te rang gi mtshan nyid brten 'gyur na / de la skur pas dngos po 'jig pa'i phyir / stong nyid dngos po 'jig pa'i rgyur 'gyur na.*

[98] *Madhyamakāvatāra* 10.33 (*Ibid.*: 397-8): *de'i phyir bdag 'dras khyod yon 'di dag ci / shes pa dang ni brjod par nus 'gyur ram / 'on kyang de dag 'phags pa klu sgrub kyis / bshad phyir dogs spangs cung zad tsam zhig smras.*

the ripening of the consequences of action is inconceivable, and rejected thinking that is obsessed with action and its consequences."[99] While Candrakirti advances what is in some ways perhaps a radically thoroughgoing account of the Buddhist reductionist project, then, what he will *not* question is that the extreme of nihilism (*ucchedavāda*) must be avoided, and that Buddhist teachings regarding the future effects of ethical actions must remain a part of the picture. Again, then, what he is principally concerned to argue is that emptiness is a condition of the possibility of existents *as they are understood by Buddhists*. Any argument which issues in a conclusion that contradicts these intuitions will therefore particularly be taken by him as having been reduced to absurdity, and any argument which (like his) issues in the conclusion that only thus are these intuitions possible will be taken by him as particularly compelling. It must not be forgotten, then, that Candrakirti's transcendental arguments are advanced in a body of works that attests concluding passages such as this: "Because of this [great compassion of yours], Lord, you have not passed over into utmost tranquility .... Thus, the world is the object of your mercy, because of the depth of which, compassionate Bhagavān, your heart turns back [to the world], so that for you there is no nirvāṇa."[100]

This last line is quite striking, and clearly alludes to the characteristically Mahāyāna emphasis that also finds expression in Nāgārjuna's contention that "saṃsāra is in no way distinct from nirvāṇa, and nirvāṇa is in no way distinct from saṃsāra." And yet, Candrakirti quite strikingly insists that it is possible to have a "yogic" vision of the ultimate, such as exceeds even his own abilities. Thus, in the *Madhyamakāvatāra* Candrakirti at one point responds to the objection that, if everything is said to be empty

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[99] *Ibid.*: 131: *de nyid kyi phyir bcom ldan 'das kyis so so'i skye bo shin tu nges par dpyod par byed pa rnams la / las dang 'bras bu la skur pa btab pa las kun rdzob 'jig par 'gyur du 'ong ngo snyam ste / las rnams kyi 'bras bu rnam par smin pa ni bsam gyis mi khyab bo zhes las dang 'bras bu la brten pa'i sems pa dgag pa mdzad do*. This is from the *bhāṣya* on MA 6.42d: *las 'bras rnams la sems pa'ang dgag pa mdzad* ("thought regarding action and its consequences has been condemned [by the Buddha]").

[100] *Ibid.*: 404-5: *des na mgon po mchog tu rab zhir gshegs par 'gyur ma lags* [=*MA* 10.41d].... *de phyir 'jig rten thugs brtse'i yul du rab dong bas / bcom ldan thugs rjes khyod thugs ni las bzlog pas khyod la mya ngan 'da' mi mnga'* [=*MA* 10.42c-d].

of essence, then why is it not also *conventionally* non-existent, like the son of a barren woman? He responds:

> This is not a question for us. That is, we others who desire to gain the gnosis of yogins – while yogins are seeing things as they are – should believe in the *svabhāva* of dharmas as it is taught [i.e., as being *niḥsvabhāvatā*]. The way to explain the essencelessness of things is by appeal to what is understood by the gnosis of yogins, as [that is made clear] in the scriptures which say [what the *svabhāva* of *dharmas* is]; it is not by depending on our own awareness, since we are ones the eye of whose intellect is obscured by the cataracts of ignorance.[101]

In this striking expression of epistemic humility, Candrakīrti makes clear that he is ultimately governed by the intuitions inherited from his tradition, which tells him that some radically transformed state (Buddhahood) is possible; and further, he here makes explicit that he takes this on faith. Candrakīrti's transcendental arguments, then, ultimately concern the conditions of the possibility *of what is taught by the Buddhist tradition*. We would, then, do well to note what Paul Griffiths concludes with respect to the assessment of transcendental arguments:

> ...[the] mistake lies not in offering such arguments (which may be valid, and may achieve what they essay, formally if not dialectically) but in the dialectical desires that accompany them. Anselm, perhaps, had it right: his ontological argument (a paradigmatically transcendental argument) is in the form of a prayer. And perhaps, too, Dignāga had it right by beginning his *Pramāṇasamuccaya* with a verse of praise and homage to Buddha as *pramāṇa*, as the giver and guarantor of knowledge, and only then passing to arguments about the nature of knowledge and its acquisition.[102]

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[101] The objection is put at *Madhyamakāvatāra* 6.107 (p.218): *gal te dngos po rnams de nyid du med na / tha snyad du yang mo gsham bu ji bzhin / de dag med pa nyid 'gyur de yi phyir / de dag rang bzhin kyis ni yod pa nyid /* ("If things do not exist as being real [=*tattvena*], then, like the son of a barren woman, they can't exist conventionally, either. Thus, they exist essentially [=*svabhāvena*]."). This answer from the *bhāṣya* occurs at pp.218-19: *kho bo cag la ni 'di brgal zhing brtag pa* [=*paryanuyoga*] *ma yin te / 'di ltar kho bo cag ni rnal 'byor pa rnams kyis dngos po dag 'di ltar gzigs shing bzhan gang dag rnal 'byor pa'i ye shes thob par 'dod pa de dag gis kyang chos kyi rang bzhin de skad bshad pa la lhag par mos par bya'o / zhes lung ji lta ba bzhin du rnal 'byor pa'i ye shes kyis thugs su chud pa'i sgo nas dngos po rang bzhin med par 'chad par zhugs pa yin gyi / rang gi shes pa la bltos nas ni ma yin te / kho bo cag ni ma rig pa'i rab rib kyis blo'i mig bsgribs pa yin pa'i phyir ro*. For a translation and discussion of this passage, see Huntington 1983: 90, *et passim*.

[102] Griffiths 1998: 196. Griffiths here quite appropriately cites Roger Jackson's (1988) article on the epithet *pramāṇabhūta* ("existing as a *pramāṇa*"), as Dignāga applies it to the Buddha – with the *pramāṇasiddhi* chapter of Dharmakīrti's *Pramāṇavārttika* then framed as a commentary on this single epithet. (On this, see also Franco 1997, chapter one. See also, in this dissertation, Chapter 2, nn.101-103.) As I have emphasized, though, I disagree with Griffiths's inclination to characterize the arguments of the Buddhist Epistemologists as "transcendental" ones.

To fault these arguments, then, for failing to convince all comers of their validity – for failing, for example, to convince the epistemic skeptic that our necessarily (or even just rationally) *believing* something entails its being *true* – is to misunderstand the context in which they are offered: for Candrakīrti, emptiness is finally a condition of the possibility of the truth of the Buddhist analysis of the human predicament.

To say this is not, however, to diminish the philosophical significance of Candrakīrti's arguments, particularly vis-à-vis Buddhist epistemology. Indeed, what I would finally emphasize in this regard is that Candrakīrti's is a fundamentally *philosophical* refusal of epistemology, and that this is the main point I have been trying to express by characterizing his as transcendental arguments. That is, my attempt to characterize the logically distinctive character of Candrakīrti's arguments is based in the conviction that, given Candrakīrti's intuitions, there are good reasons for finding his interlocutor's demands for justification *in principle* problematic. Candrakīrti's problems with epistemologists such as Dignāga are not, for example, such that Dharmakīrti, in addressing some of the problematic or underdetermined issues in Dignāga's thought, might hope to have answered them; rather, it is *this very approach*, and its guiding intuition (viz., that a sufficiently refined account of our epistemic practices can show us that we are, in fact, in touch with something "really" existent), that is the problem. This is why all that Candrakīrti has really needed to show (and what he has, in fact, devoted most of his attention to showing) is that his interlocutor's categories represent *technical* elaborations of what are eminently *conventional* notions – with *any* such developments *necessarily* compromising what is, finally, Candrakīrti's main metaphysical claim.

It is not the case, then, that Candrakīrti's refusal of his interlocutor's demands for justification represents a naive refusal of philosophically rigorous argument; rather, Candrakīrti's metaphysical claim is such as to require that the *way* he argue for it is precisely to refuse this interlocutor's demands. This is because Candrakīrti's is the

metaphysical claim that *there is nothing more real than our conventions*, insofar as *conventionally* – which is the same as to say *dependently* – is the only way that anything *can* exist. Given this intuition , it is *necessarily* the case that this is not a metaphysical claim that can be justified by way of the Buddhist Epistemologist's philosophical approach; for the Epistemologist's peculiarly technical usage of conventional categories *just is* an attempt to get at something more "real" behind our conventions. Accordingly, Candrakirti attempts to circumvent the normativist justificatory skeptic's challenge (i.e., the objection that Candrakirti's position is *unjustified*, insofar as it cannot be warranted by any of the belief-forming practices that the Epistemologist admits as reliable) by way of a transcendental argument – one to the effect that *the Epistemologist's own demand for justification itself presupposes the truth of Candrakirti's claim.*

Thus, if (as the very category of transcendental arguments suggests) there is something akin to Kant in Candrakirti's arguments, it is *not* in the sense that we have here a sharp distinction between conventional "appearance" and ultimate "reality."[103] Rather, the very intuition that motivates Candrakirti's refusal of epistemology is precisely that there is *not* such a distinction.[104] As the Large Sūtra of Perfect Wisdom has it,

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[103] Such is what influential interpreters such as Th. Stcherbatsky (1927) and T. R. V. Murti (1960) can plausibly be said to have argued with respect to Madhyamaka.

[104] This conclusion, it seems to me, calls into question John Dunne's contention that "By placing true reality on the side of the ultimate, Madhyamaka philosophers claim that the conventional world as it appears is necessarily unreal in some way." (cf., Chapter 4, n.37.) In addition to *MMK* 25.19, cf., *Prasannapadā* 10.11-11.3, where Candrakirti makes explicit the *sāṃvṛtatva* of what is, for him, the "ultimate" truth of *pratityasamutpāda*: *tad evaṃ hetupratyayāpekṣaṃ bhāvānām utpādaṃ paridipayatā bhagavatā ahetvekahetuviṣamahetusaṃbhūtatvaṃ svaparobhayakṛtatvaṃ ca bhāvānāṃ niṣiddhaṃ bhavati; tanniṣedāc ca sāṃvṛtānāṃ padārthānāṃ yathāvasthitaṃ sāṃvṛtaṃ svarūpam udbhāvitaṃ bhavati. sa eva-idānim sāṃvṛtaḥ pratityasamutpādaḥ, svabhāvena-anutpannatvād; āryajñānāpekṣayā na-asmin nirodho vidyate; yāvan na-asmin nirgamo vidyate, ity anirodhādhibhir aṣṭābhir viśeṣaṇair viśiṣyate. yathā ca nirodhādayo na santi pratityasamutpādasya, tathā sakalaśāstreṇa pratipādayiṣyati.* ("The Bhagavān, in this way illuminating the arising of existents in dependence on causes and conditions, rejected existents' being produced from themselves, from another, or from both, as well as their having arisen from no cause, from a single cause, or from an inaccessible cause. And based on the rejection of these, the conventional nature of conventional things, as it really is, is made clear: *that*, i.e. dependent origination, is also *conventional*, because of [its] being unoriginated by way of an essence. From the perspective of the awareness of the venerable, there is no cessation with respect to this; to that extent, there is no motion in it; in this way, it is explained in terms of eight characteristics, beginning with 'without cessation.' And just as there is no cessation, etc., on the part of *pratityasamutpāda*, [Nāgarjuna] will illuminate that it is the same way through the rest of the treatise.")

"Worldly convention is not one thing and ultimate truth another. What is the Suchness of worldly convention, that is the Suchness of ultimate reality."[105] That Candrakīrti should argue this is, moreover, just as we should expect from a Mādhyamika; for just as Candrakīrti will invariably insist on the mutual interdependence of any dichotomous terms (and hence, on the impossibility of any one's making sense without relation to its complement), so, too, with *paramārtha* and *saṃvṛti*: *paramārtha* only makes sense in relation to *saṃvṛti*, since the ultimate truth of emptiness, too, is *upādāya prajñapti*.[106] It is, perhaps, rather harder to sustain the converse claim: how could it be that *saṃvṛti* only makes sense in relation to *paramārtha*? But this is precisely where the transcendental argument is most helpful; for on this reading, the claim is that *saṃvṛti* is only *possible* in virtue of there being some abstract state of affairs which is its *svabhāva* – and that "essence" (*svabhāva*) is the abstract state of affairs of "there being no essence" (*niḥsvabhāvatā*).[107] Given this intuition, it is *necessarily* the case that it is incoherent to require justification by appeal to something more "real" than what our conventional epistemic practices yield. Given this intuition, moreover, the "ultimate" consists not in some radically "other" state of affairs, but in the realization (radically transformative, to be sure) that there *is* nothing more real than this. On Candrakīrti's view, it is emphatically not the case that one who realizes this (i.e., a Buddha) does "not see the ordinary things of the world"[108]; if anything, it seems that the ordinary world is *all* that such a Buddha would see.

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[105] Conze 1975: 529.

[106] Cf., the apt comment of Huntington (1983: 95): "the dichotomy of *paramārtha* and *saṃvṛti* is, like all dichotomies, simply another aspect of conventional truth, and therefore the unqualified negation of *saṃvṛti* on any grounds whatsoever must necessarily constitute an equally unqualified negation of *paramārtha*."

[107] In the end, then, there is a sense in which Candrakīrti thus agrees with Sthiramati that "the conventional does not make any sense without some basis (*upādāna*)" (*na hi saṃvṛtir nirupādāna yujyate*). It's just that the "basis" (*upādāna*), for Candrakīrti, is an *abstract state of affairs* (viz., that of its being the case that any basis will always turn out to be *upādāya prajñapti*), and not, as it is for Sthiramati, something *dravyasat*. (Cf., Chapter 4, n. 79).

[108] Cf., Chapter 4, n.37.

CHAPTER 6
Concluding Unscientific Postscript: Justification and the Contexts of Reasoning

6.i. Introduction: On the cultivation of persons

It seems to me that even in the context of their contemporary academic disciplinary setting, philosophers are generally motivated in their projects by questions that are larger than (but encompassing of) the questions they explicitly address. With respect to epistemology, for example, the different ways that questions are addressed can in fact be seen to serve different intuitions about what the world and human persons are or must be like. Thus, for instance, it is possible to imagine the often addressed "problem of other minds" being variously considered in the service of any number of different accounts of what, metaphysically speaking, individuates human persons. It is possible to imagine accounts of the "problem of other minds" that consist in arguments whose conclusion is that we are all made *imago Dei*, just as it is possible to imagine accounts of this problem consisting in arguments whose conclusion, to the contrary, is that our "minds" are merely epiphenomenal to the material world which is all that really exists. Indeed, we need not only imagine this, but can readily find examples.

More generally, then, perhaps we can say that the accounts of epistemologists are (or can at least be credibly reconstructed as) fundamentally concerned to get at *what must be the case with respect to persons* in order for experience to be possible. Certainly, it is easy to see specifically Buddhist discussions of epistemological issues as fundamentally concerning whether or not the possibility of experience requires that we posit a "self," in whatever sense is intended. In other words, for Buddhists such as Dignāga to describe or explain our perceptual awareness is really to address the question: what must we posit, or

what account of the person must we assume, for the phenomena related to *knowing* to be possible? And in particular, how can these phenomena be accounted for both in the absence of a "self," and at the same time in such a way as to make possible the realization of Buddhahood?

Thus, in concluding our assessment of the different Indian philosophers treated in this dissertation, and with the hope of somehow situating their various projects vis-à-vis one another, I think that we can usefully start by asking: in each case, what account of the person, what *kind of person*, do these philosophers imagine? To put the question more pointedly, each of these thinkers is interested in explaining the *possibility* of what kind of person? I would like to introduce my concluding assessment by briefly considering this question with respect to each of the traditions we have addressed. I would like to do so, however, not in the spirit of offering definitive ethical characterizations of these projects, but simply to emphasize *that* the arguments we have considered must finally be understood in the full contexts of their respective "ways of life." My view is that to appreciate the significance of this is to recognize two philosophically significant points about traditions of reasoning: First, epistemological arguments such as we have considered (including Candrakīrti's principled refusal of epistemology) may (and, I think, do) have some purchase with respect to whether or not the beliefs and practices justified thereby are rationally held and/or engaged in – but they do not (and probably *cannot*) give us good reasons for *choosing* to hold those beliefs, or for choosing to undertake those practices. For the beliefs and practices commended by these various traditions of thought all more basically presuppose specific axiological commitments (commitments, that is, regarding *what we should value*), which must already be shared before the project is thought to be worth undertaking.

The second point relates to the first, and concerns what is being *done* by the exercise of philosophy in these various traditions of reasoning. The point here is that the

arguments we have considered are best understood as not merely *prolegomena* to the respective tasks of realizing the sought-for values; rather, the development and deployment of these arguments are *themselves* part of the practices intended to cultivate the respective realizations of value. That is, perhaps what thinkers within these traditions of reasoning are *doing* is not so much trying to persuade others (i.e., those external to the tradition in question) that they ought similarly to undertake these practices (though certainly there may have been something of this); rather, perhaps the elaboration of these arguments is *already* a central part of the practice of cultivating the virtues commended by the respective traditions. Thus, to ask, with respect to each of the traditions we have considered, what sort of person it imagines bringing about, is to move towards appreciating that the arguments we have considered function, in their respective contexts, as *exercises in the cultivation of those kinds of persons*. I would suggest, in other words, that the thinkers treated in this dissertation are finally best understood not as having advanced arguments that are readily abstracted from their contexts and trotted out to address issues familiar to contemporary philosophers (though they may also be that), but as having been engaged in various projects of *self-cultivation*, with the advancement of these projects being among the things they were chiefly concerned to *do* with their "arguments." It seems to me, then, that Dignāga and Dharmakīrti, Kumārila and Pārthasārathimiśra, Bhāvaviveka and Candrakīrti all exemplify an understanding that Pierre Hadot has aptly characterized in terms of "philosophy as a way of life." Let us, then, briefly consider what *kinds* of "selves" these thinkers were variously concerned to cultivate.[1]

[1] While it is particularly Pierre Hadot (1995) whom I will explicitly discuss in concluding, I have also been very much influenced, in my thinking regarding this chapter, by Griffiths 1999 and the introductory essay of Kapstein 2001 (which is entitled "What is 'Buddhist Philosophy'?"). In this connection, I might also mention Cabezón 1998, Collins 1994, Dreyfus 1997b, and the conclusion to Dreyfus 1997a ("Philosophy as an Education of the Mind"), as well as Michel Foucault's notion of "technologies of the self" (as represented in Luther H. Martin, et al. 1988), for Hadot's comments on which, see Hadot 1995: 206-213.

6.ii. Buddhist Epistemology and the removal of defilements

As clearly emerged in my survey of Buddhist epistemology in Chapter 2 (as well as in considering the Mīmāṃsaka critique thereof in Chapter 3, and particularly in considering Candrakīrti's critique in Chapter 5), one of the guiding intuitions of the epistemological tradition initiated by Dignāga is that perception (*pratyakṣa*) is constitutively "free of conceptual elaboration" (*kalpanāpoḍham*). Something like this is, to be sure, a widely held intuition, and surely we are all likely to agree that there is a difference between initial instances of perception, and subsequent reflection thereon.[2] Dignāga's technical elaboration of this feature, though, reflects what seems to me to be a characteristically Buddhist preoccupation that goes, as it were, to the heart of the "deep grammar" of Buddhism. Roger Jackson has aptly expressed this fundamental intuition: "... if the ultimate nature of the mind is such that it cognizes phenomena as they actually are, one will be able to argue that any cognition of phenomena as they are *not* is not natural to the mind, and thus adventitious and capable of ultimate and complete correction." Jackson elaborates, characterizing this as an "optimistic epistemology":

> This observation is closely correlated with the traditional Buddhist account of perception, in which the very first moment of cognition of an object is unmediated and pure, then subject to *a posteriori* conceptual construction. It is what might be called an "optimistic" epistemology, since it allows that direct cognition of ultimates *is* possible for beings. A "pessimistic" epistemology (e.g., that of Kant or Wittgenstein) would maintain that although the mind is capable of forming useful approximate representations, its cognitions never are unmediated by conceptions, and thus not "pure." Indeed, a pure cognition would be regarded in such an epistemology as impossible, for it is the nature of cognizers to have a point of view and to be limited by the fact of being an organism. Such an

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[2] For example, as I noted in Chapter 3 (n.141), Kumārila's own account of perception does retain the intuition that perception at least *initially* affords access to something more unmediated; thus, Kumārila allows that there is an initial moment of *pratyakṣa* that is *nirvikalpaka*, simply adding that subsequent, *savikalpaka* moments still count as *pratyakṣa*. And Alston, stressing the phenomenological character of perception, emphasizes (contra such influential works as Proudfoot 1985): "From the fact that we use concepts to identify something as of a certain type (How else?!), it does *not* follow that *what* we are identifying 'involves' concepts and judgments." (1991, p.41) As good direct realists, then, Alston and the Mīmāṃsakas do not deny that, phenomenologically, perception has a non-conceptual feel – only that this fact endows perception with a privileged status.

epistemology is clearly somewhat materialistic in orientation, whereas Buddhist epistemology assumes the mind's ultimate independence of particular bodies.[3]

This idea is amply attested in the Indian Buddhist tradition, from a relatively early point, with its long having been emphasized that the "defilements" (*kleśa*; Pali, *kilesa*) that afflict us are "adventitious" (*āgantuka*).[4] Again and again, throughout the Indian tradition, realization of the *summum bonum* is thus characterized in terms of the *removal* of such adventitious afflictions (variously referred to as, e.g., *āsravas*, "passions," *āvaraṇas*, "obstructions," etc.), with the mere removal thereof thus restoring the intrinsically reliable character of our epistemic faculties. Thus, for example, Buddhas are variously characterized as *anāsrava*, "without passions," and as having removed both the "obstructions that are afflictions" (*kleśāvaraṇa*) and the "obstructions to what is to be known" (*jñeyāvaraṇa*). Examples of such language of "removal" could be multiplied at length, but consider only this one from the conclusion to Vasubandhu's *Viṃśatikāvṛtti*: having concluded that he has developed his "proof of there being nothing but representations" (*vijñaptimātratāsiddhi*) to be best of his ability, Vasubandhu concedes that it is, finally, not ultimately intelligible (*sā tu na cintyā*), except for Buddhas – by whom it is definitively understood "because of their not having any obstacles to the awareness of all knowable things in all their aspects" (*sarvākārasarvajñeyajñānāvighātād*).[5] It is telling, in other words, that when Vasubandhu finally concludes by emphasizing the extent to which his own argument exceeds his grasp, and the extent to which that grasp is surpassed by the understanding of

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[3] Jackson 1993: 416n. Jackson usefully refers to an earlier article (Jackson 1990) for further elaboration on this. For more general reflections on what Jackson has characterized in terms of "optimistic epistemology," see, *inter alia*, the essays collected in Forman 1990 (and particularly that of Griffiths).

[4] E.g., *Aṅguttara Nikāya* I.10: *pabhassaram idaṃ bhikkhave cittaṃ / taṃ ca kho āgantukehi upakkilesehi upakkiliṭṭhaṃ* ("This mind, O monks, is luminous, but it is defiled by adventitious defilements"). (Cited in Jackson 1990: 96)

[5] Lévi 1925: 10-11: *"vijñaptimātratāsiddhiḥ svaśaktisadṛśī mayā / kṛtā-iyaṃ sarvathā sā tu na cintyā" sarvaprakārā tu sā mādṛśaiś cintayituṃ na śakyate / tarkāviṣayatvāt / kasya punaḥ sā sarvathā gocara ity āya "buddhagocaraḥ"* [22]. *buddhānāṃ hi sā bhagavatāṃ sarvaprakāraṃ gocaraḥ sarvākārasarvajñeyajñānāvighātād iti.*

fully realized Buddhas, he characterizes the latter in terms of what they *lack* – specifically, the adventitious "obstacles" (here, *vighāta*) that finally cause us to suffer.

It is, I would suggest, finally this vision that motivates Dignāga and Dharmakīrti's emphasis on the fact of perception's being inherently "free of conceptual elaboration." That is, "conceptual elaboration" (*kalpanā, vikalpa*, etc.) is here seen as inextricably tied up with our cognitive and soteriological error, with its finally being our mistaken elaboration of the fiction that we exist as enduring "selves" that is the chief target of this project. The tendency so to elaborate, then, is on this reading seen as a species of "defilement" or "obscuration" – something, in any case, *adventitious*, the removal of which would leave our untrammeled epistemic faculties free to register things "as they really are" (*yathābhūtam*). To the extent, then, that we understand the Buddhist Epistemologists' commitment to perception's "freedom from conceptual elaboration" as thus guided by traditional images regarding the removal of adventitious obscurations, perhaps we can plausibly characterize the Epistemologists' practice of philosophy as particularly meant to bring about or *cultivate* precisely such removal. That is, perhaps this very emphasis, elaborated as a secondary theory, becomes (in Steven Collins's words) "a form of *practice* in which its truth is realized, a practice which might be summarized as a certain kind of textualized meditative introspection, occurring within a specific, performed social and behavioral environment."[6] In concluding Chapter 2, I noted (contra Richard Hayes's "skeptical" reading of Dignāga) something of the extent to which such a reading makes sense of Dignāga's opening homage to the Buddha, which marks Dignāga's entire treatise as one that is developed within a context of devotion (*gus pa*; Skt., *śraddhā*) to the Buddha. In due course, I will also note that there are some more general hermeneutical considerations that recommend adopting the view that Dignāga's

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[6] Collins 1994: 79.

philosophical emphasis on perception's non-conceptual character might itself represent a religious *practice* – that, in other words, his is finally a *normative* emphasis.

6.iii. Mīmāṃsaka epistemology and "those who desire heaven"

What, then, might we say of the Mīmāṃsakas? What kind of person might they be trying to cultivate by way of philosophical practices such as the elaboration of a doctrine of "intrinsic validity"? It seems to me that the Mīmāṃsakas themselves have told us precisely what they have in mind in this regard: "one desirous of heaven" (*svargakāmaḥ*). This expression occurs, as we saw, in the Vedic injunction (*codanā*), adduced by Śabara, the question of whose validity (*prāmāṇya*) is paradigmatically at issue for Mīmāṃsakas: *svargakāmo yajeta*, "one who desires heaven should perform a sacrifice." As I suggested in concluding Chapter 3, then, the Vedic injunctions whose authority the Mīmāṃsakas wish to establish will only have any purchase given the prior acceptance of the axiological commitments so succinctly expressed in this particular injunction – given, that is, a prior commitment to the belief that heaven (specifically as understood by the Mīmāṃsakas) *is the kind of thing we ought to desire*.

This turns out, even on cursory review, to involve a complex and highly ramified axiological framework. It involves, for example, a commitment to the view that "*dharma*," as the Mīmāṃsakas understand it, is what will bring about this desirable state, insofar as it is *dharma*, Śabara tells us, that "connects a person with the highest good" (*sa hi niḥśreyasena puruṣaṃ saṃyunakti*).[7] This, in turn, involves a further commitment to what Sheldon Pollock aptly characterizes as the "essential a priori of Mīmāṃsā": the stipulative definition of *dharma* "as a transcendent entity, and so ... unknowable by any

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[7] Cf., Chapter 3, n.20.

form of knowledge not itself transcendent."[8] This is, as we saw in Chapter 3, the commitment that makes the Veda uniquely unfalsifiable, with its "transcendence" (*apauruṣeyatva*) making it impossible for it to serve as a locus of the kinds of human defects which alone could override its prima facie validity.

As for the kind of person whose cultivation is thus implicitly enjoined, we might briefly consider Alexis Sanderson's characterization of the Mīmāṃsā tradition in this regard. Sanderson's characterization comes in the context of his attention to the opposed poles of "purity" and "power," as these were held to be available as alternative goals in the milieu of Kaśmīr from the 9th through 13th centuries. Sanderson (principally a scholar of the Śaiva traditions of Kaśmīr) is, in the end, chiefly interested in the "power" pole, with the achievement of this representing the promise of the *tāntrika* path. The "purity" pole, in contrast, Sanderson appropriately takes to be definitively associated with the *vaidika* path, and he accordingly looks to the authoritative sources of Mīmāṃsā for normative statements of this, offering a quick sketch of what he aptly characterizes as the "atheistic autonomism of the rituals."[9] This rubric is apt insofar as Mīmāṃsakas are generally atheists for whom the results of correctly performed sacrificial acts simply follow mechanistically, in accordance with the unseen force of *apūrva*, which is posited to explain how the result of a correctly performed sacrifice follows necessarily, even given the possibility of a temporal gap (one possibly spanning lifetimes) between action and result. This picture entails, among other things, that Mīmāṃsakas generally eschew characteristically Indian talk of "liberation" (*mokṣa*) from the undesirable "cycle" (*saṃsāra*) of death and rebirth, instead favoring the view (characteristic of the earliest Vedic literature) that continued temporal existence is a desideratum.[10]

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[8] Chapter 3, n.178.

[9] Sanderson 1985: 193ff. Sanderson notes (p.211, n.54) that "this description of the ritualist Mīmāṃsakas as atheist autonomists is Somānanda's," and he cites the latter's *Śivadṛṣṭi*.

[10] For insightful reflections on the characteristically Vedic desire for "more time," and the transvaluation of time with the development of the Upaniṣadic and Buddhist accounts of *saṃsāra*, see

Sanderson develops a brief sketch of such Mīmāṃsaka commitments and presuppositions as should be familiar from our Chapter 3, characterizing the direct realism of the tradition as an "ultra-realist epistemology" that requires that Mīmāṃsakas reject, *inter alia*, the "reflexive awareness" (*svasaṃvitti*) posited by the Buddhist Epistemologists: "Cognitions, said the Mīmāṃsakas, are not formed entities: they are acts, which by their very nature produce in their objects the quality of being known. We therefore know that we know only by inference from this effect, not by introspection. Thus the objective world was to confront the orthodox Brahman pre-arranged, with no contribution from his side, in an eternal taxonomy of universals and values."[11] Accordingly, "The Brahman was not to see himself as having the capacity to constitute his own values or as able to have cognitions which were not purely the making manifest of that external world which was the sphere of his enjoined actions and the receptacle of the values which these injunctions entailed."[12] On this view, then, human desires and intentions are finally irrelevant to the performance of Vedic ritual – a fact that Francis Clooney has aptly characterized in terms of such ritual's effecting a "decentering" of the human person.[13] This "decentering" is, however, radically distinct from the sort that may be said to follow from the Buddhist doctrine of selflessness, and Sanderson has nicely captured the larger view of the person that results:

> In harmony with his conviction that the Vedic rituals were mechanisms dependent for their results only on the exactitude of their performance, and that these results would accrue to him alone as their agent, [the *vaidika* Brahman] held that his present experience and all the perceptible aspects of his identity were the outcome

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Collins 1982: 29-64. On the Mīmāṃsakas' general eschewal of the goal of *mokṣa* (and for a useful characterization of Mīmāṃsaka anthropology more generally), see also Halbfass 1991: 274-279 ("Man in Pūrvamīmāṃsā").

[11] Sanderson 1985: 193. Sanderson alludes here to the characteristically Mīmāṃsaka doctrine of *jñātatā*, "known-ness" – with the claim being that one knows *that* one knows something simply by presuming so (by way of *arthāpatti*, "necessary presumption") from the fact that an act of knowing has taken place (i.e., the fact that something is "known," *jñāta*). For more on this notion, cf., Bhatt 1962: 51ff. There is an interesting critique of *jñātatā* by Mokṣākaragupta; cf., Singh 1985: 24.

[12] Sanderson 1985: 195.

[13] Clooney 1990: 163, ff.

> of nothing but his own actions. ... Thus in his self-representation, the most orthodox of Brahmans was the most individual of individuals. For him there were no external powers which moulded his life. His "deity", his miraculous power of cosmic consistency, was nothing but the law of his action.... [In the view of the Mīmāṃsakas,] the Brahman was to achieve his depersonalisation *within* the scrupulous execution of his obligatory rites through the renunciation of all personalising motivation. For it was motivated action alone that tied the eternal and omnipresent "I" to its beginningless and potentially endless series of births into the here and now.[14]

Such, at any rate, is one plausible characterization of the sort of person whose cultivation is commended by those *vaidika* Brahmans who understand themselves as *svargakāmaḥ* ("desirous of heaven"). The example of a Vedic injunction paradigmatically adduced by Śabara, then, neatly serves to introduce something of the whole range of axiological issues already in play for Mīmāṃsakas. While I hope to have shown in Chapter 3 that Mīmāṃsakas following Kumārila developed cogent arguments to the effect that their practices were rationally undertaken and their beliefs rationally held, these epistemological arguments do not give the non-Mīmāṃsaka good reason for *choosing* them. This is not necessarily to deny that there might be other arguments to the effect that some axiological commitments are preferable to others – only that the epistemological arguments we have considered do not accomplish this. I would finally suggest, however, that such commitments are not generally *chosen* – and indeed, perhaps that they do not represent the sort of beliefs that *can* be chosen.

Whether or not such is the case, however, I am now suggesting that what the philosophical works we have surveyed are chiefly *doing* is not working to persuade others to adopt these beliefs or undertake these practices (though of course they may have

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[14] Sanderson 1985: 195-196. Sanderson's concluding sentences may, it seems, reflect the view that these Mīmāṃsakas are, in fact, intent on something like *mokṣa*, such that they wish to *end* the "endless series of births into the here and now." This seems to me misleading, since, while Mīmāṃsakas may indeed wish to realize a sort of "heaven" (*svarga*) that involves no further birth "into the here and now," heaven is nevertheless generally conceived by Mīmāṃsakas as something like continued temporal existence – as the realization, that is, of pleasures of the same sort as humans generally seek here in the world. Cf., Halbfass 1991: 275: "The Mīmāṃsā deals primarily with dharma, with ritual duty and sacrificial performances, which are supposed to produce religious merit and appropriate reward for the sacrificer either in his current existence or after death. It specializes, so to speak, in ritualistic and religious planning, both for this life and the hereafter; its aims are not beyond time and space."

that effect)[15]; rather, these works (even the parts that are easily abstracted by us as epistemological prolegomena) are best understood as *already* doing the work of cultivating the kinds of persons commended by their traditions. Properly to "read" these works, then, is already to be working at realizing the axiological aims they presuppose. That is, to engage these works in the way that (we can infer) is required by their "ideal reader" is to be engaged in a *practice of self-cultivation*. This is not, of course, to say that only "insiders" to these traditions read these works; clearly, Sanskritic philosophers developed a recognizable and characteristic sort of pan-Indic discourse that was largely shared, and this owing to the great familiarity which, for example, Mīmāṃsakas and Indian Buddhists had with one another's works (as I have emphasized in taking the Mīmāṃsaka doctrine as a critique of Buddhist epistemology). Rather, I am simply urging that something like a final or definitive philosophical assessment (of the sort that, e.g., would finally settle whether or not we should all become Mīmāṃsakas, or Buddhists, or whatever) is not possible, insofar as one can never (as it were) *exhaustively* "read" these works without already being engaged in the practices of which they are parts. Again, I will say more shortly about the hermeneutical considerations that can lead us thus to infer the "ideal readers" assumed by these texts.

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[15] Here, it is relevant to note one of the many useful distinctions subtly remarked by J. L. Austin: that between the *illocutionary* and the *perlocutionary* force of utterances (or, as we may also say more generally, of *discourses*). Both of these are in turn to be distinguished from a simply *locutionary* act, i.e., the uttering of something. By "illocutionary act," Austin understood the "performance of an act *in* saying something as opposed to performance of an act *of* saying something." (1975: 99-100) With this notion, Austin wished to emphasize that utterances typically function to *do* something – ask or answer a question, announce an intention, persuade, etc. A *perlocutionary* act, in contrast, consists in producing "certain consequential effects upon the feelings, thoughts, or actions of the audience, or of the speaker, or of other persons: and it may [or may not] be done with the design, intention, or purpose of producing them...." (1975: 101) Thus, for example, we might say that someone performs the (illocutionary) act of uttering a *threatening* sentence, and that as a result, there takes place the (perlocutionary) act of someone's feeling *intimidated*. (Such distinctions often figure significantly in legal contexts, where it is important to distinguish between what someone *intends* by their actions, and what those actions *bring about*.) In the present context, then, we might say that Sanskritic philosophical discourse is chiefly performing the (illocutionary) act of, say, catechesis or self-cultivation – and that among the (perlocutionary) acts consequently performed are acts of persuasion or dissuasion. For more on this distinction, see Cohen 1973.

6.iv. Candrakīrti's metaphysical claim and the cultivation of compassion

What, finally, might we say about the sort of person Candrakīrti is seeking to cultivate? Here again, we have seen that Candrakīrti clearly tells us some important things in this regard, and we have already considered these at length in concluding Chapter 5. Thus, we might attend once again to this passage from the *Madhyamakāvatāra*, and consider that it might credibly be characterized as an explicit statement regarding his ideal reader:

> The seed of a perfect Buddha's insight exists in the [kind of] person who, having heard about emptiness while a common person, has a welling-up of inward joy, his eyes wet with tears arisen from that great joy, the hairs on his body prickling. Only such a person is a [suitable] vessel for the real teachings, [only] to him should the ultimate truth be taught, [only] he has the qualities that [must] accompany that.[16]

Candrakīrti's ideal reader, then, is one who, owing to her fathomless compassion, will not make what Candrakīrti considers the cardinal error of mistaking the teaching of "emptiness" for a nihilistic doctrine – with this ultimately being important insofar as it is what the Buddha taught: "The way to explain the essencelessness of things is by appeal to what is understood by the gnosis of yogins, as [that is made clear] in the scriptures which say [what the *svabhāva* of *dharmas* is]; it is not by depending on our own awareness, since we are ones the eye of whose intellect is obscured by the cataracts of ignorance."[17]

Given such expressions of his guiding commitments, it seems to me that Candrakīrti's recurrent emphasis on the proper understanding of emptiness (his recurrent emphasis, that is, on the importance of understanding this teaching in such a way that it can be seen as *enjoining*, rather than undermining, compassion) can usefully be seen as an instance of something like *catechesis*. Again, then, Candrakīrti's recurrent emphasis

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[16] See Chapter 5, n.91.

[17] See Chapter 5, n.101.

on the proper understanding of emptiness, and on the compassion that is thought to entail, is a fundamentally *normative* one. That is, a properly engaged and meditative reading of Candrakīrti's corpus can be taken as intended to constitute *compassionate persons*, with sustained reflection on Candrakīrti's deployment of the conceptual terms of his tradition meant to constitute the reader as the kind of subject who spontaneously apprehends the world through the lens of those terms. I would now like to consider some general philosophical and hermeneutical considerations that recommend taking Candrakīrti's work (like that of Dignāga and of Kumārila) in something like this way.

6.v. "Philosophy as a Way of Life"

I do not mean for these brief characterizations to be definitive, and I would readily grant that all of them would require significantly further nuance, and that there is likely to be considerable overlap. Rather, what I mean to have drawn attention to is finally the fact *that* these different traditions of discourse all make clear the extent to which they presuppose various (and sometimes mutually exclusive) axiological commitments, and the fact *that* the ideal readers envisaged by these works will be those who share these commitments. More importantly, I have here been drawing attention to the fact that those who engaged religiously with the discourses we have surveyed were *doing* something, were performing some *practice*. Nāgārjuna, in delivering the foundational *kārikās* that exemplify the thought procedures and conceptual terms he took to epitomize the Buddhist tradition; Candrakīrti, in offering a close and lengthy commentary on those verses; and all of the named (e.g., Abhayākaragupta) and unnamed students of such Indian monastic universities as Nālandā and Vikramaśīla who studied and debated this lineage of works – in thus engaging with this sort of discursive activity,

all of these can be seen to have been working to constitute themselves as persons whose "mental discourse" (*manojalpa*) was Buddhist through and through.[18]

To stress this is to emphasize, as I have previously intimated, that none of the arguments we have surveyed provides good reasons for *choosing* to hold the beliefs or undertake the practices in question. There is, moreover, a good argument to be made to the effect that they *cannot* do so[19] – an argument to the effect, that is, that beliefs are not the sort of things that one can *choose*. This argument has been put succinctly by Bernard Williams:

> ... it is not a contingent fact that I cannot bring it about, just like that, that I believe something, as it is a contingent fact that I cannot bring it about, just like that, that I'm blushing. Why is this? One reason is connected with the characteristic of beliefs that they aim at truth. If I could acquire a belief at will, I could acquire it whether it was true or not; moreover I would know that I could acquire it whether it was true or not. If in full consciousness I could will to acquire a 'belief' irrespective of its truth, it is unclear that before the event I could seriously think of it as a belief, i.e. as something purporting to represent reality.[20]

That is, if it were logically possible fully to *choose* beliefs, then it would have to be possible for someone to choose to believe something they know not to be true – and this is not possible.

It seems to me that this argument (and in particular, my normative claim about what is and is not "possible" with respect to belief) can usefully be unpacked in terms of ordinary language philosophy. Thus: the fact that one cannot *decide* to blush is a logically contingent fact – it is not integral to the fact of blushing that it be the sort of thing that one be incapable of willing, it just happens to be this way. It remains,

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[18] More on *manojalpa* shortly.

[19] Which, again, is not to say that they never have the *effect* of persuading someone, that they never (as it were) "cause" someone to change beliefs (cf., n.15, above). I am here making a strictly logical point – one of the implicit entailments of which is that, in cases where persons do in fact adopt new beliefs, there is likely to be a more complex story behind that than simply their having seen the force of certain reasons (though certainly, they may experience such as a part of the story). As I will shortly stress, one of the upshots of this logical point is that the question of the truth or validity of an argument is logically independent of whether or not it "succeeds" (say, rhetorically) in persuading someone else.

[20] Williams 1973: 148.

however, *logically* possible for it to be the sort of thing that could be willed – that is, it could conceivably be the case that one be capable of willing herself to blush (and indeed, there are quite likely to be actors or yogins who have successfully trained themselves to do this), and it would still be the same phenomenon. In contrast, it is *not* a contingent fact that we are incapable of *deciding* to believe something. That is, it is *logically, definitionally* true of "belief" that it is the sort of thing that cannot be compelled; it is *necessarily* the case that we are incapable of simply deciding to believe, since if we could do so, "belief" would no longer be the same phenomenon.

But (and this is the point I want to make) these claims about *logical* contingency and necessity can perhaps better be made simply in terms of ordinary language use. Thus, I have said it is definitionally "impossible" that we be able to *decide* what to believe – specifically, as Williams argues, because if we really could do so, then it must be possible to decide to believe something you know not to be true; and it is *this* that is the "impossible" thing here. But the "impossibility" here really just has to do with *how we use these words*. Thus, if someone *did* say "I believe this, but I know it's not true," most native speakers of English would conclude that this person must not mean the same thing by "believe" that most of us mean. The important thing, then, is perhaps not so much a logical impossibility per se, but simply that it is a misuse of the word "believe" to think it sensible to say "I believe this, but I know it's not true." The "logical" necessity here, then, is really just a function of the logic of the word's *definition* – and problems with unpacking the idea of its "definition" can then be referred simply to how the word is *used*. Thus, the argument can be rephrased: You can't *decide* what to believe, since if "decide" means what it usually does (i.e., that there are a range of options among which to choose), it would have to be possible to decide to believe something one knows not to be true; and it *cannot* be the case that one believes something one knows not to be true. And if a persistent student were to rejoin by insisting that "you can't tell me that I can't

believe in this way," then the proper rejoinder is: If you claim to believe such a thing, then you are not using the word *believe* in the way that it's conventionally used; you must mean something different by it than most people mean, since the conventional use of the word definitionally involves the claim that the thing *believed* is also *true*.[21]

This is, I think, a cogent characterization of the human epistemic situation, though surely there is more to be said on the subject, and the argument as I have sketched it (insofar as I understand it) no doubt has problems.[22] Be that as it may, it seems to me that there are also important hermeneutical reasons for reaching the more modest (though related and still significant) conclusion that the arguments we have surveyed in this dissertation are best considered not as merely epistemological *prolegomena* to the respective tasks of accomplishing the sought-for values, but as already among the practices that are designed to realize these. Here, then, I would like to develop something of the case for the possibility of our inferring from various formal properties of their texts that the thinkers we have surveyed understood themselves as engaged in practices of self-cultivation. In this regard, I think that students of Indian philosophy stand particularly to be instructed by Pierre Hadot, a perceptive scholar of the philology and philosophy relating to Western antiquity.

As reflected in the title of a recent collection of Hadot's essays (1995), Hadot has long been particularly concerned with evoking the extent to which philosophy was, among the ancients, a "way of life." That is, he has drawn attention to the many indications that ancient philosophical works (and indeed, most of the works of Western

[21] Cf. (as noted in Chapter 5, n.28), Cavell: "I am in no way hoping, nor would I wish, to convince anyone that certain statements cannot be made or ought not be made. My interest in statements is in what they do mean and imply. If 'cannot' or 'ought' are to come in here at all, then I confess to urging that you cannot say something, relying on what is ordinarily meant in saying it, and mean something other than would ordinarily be meant."

[22] Consider, e.g., Mourad 2001, which develops some relevant criticisms with respect to Alvin Plantinga's notion of "warrant and proper function," with Mourad noting a "tension between the mechanistic conception of belief formation implied by Plantinga's account of warrant as proper function and his explicit rejection of determinism...." (623).

philosophy predating the Enlightenment) were the works of people who understood themselves to be engaged in a *practice*, and who accordingly understood their participation in philosophical discourse as itself a sort of "spiritual exercise." Among the many valuable insights that emerge from the corpus of Hadot's studies is an especially compelling hermeneutical lesson: where ancient (or otherwise remote) discursive artifacts seem most baffling to us, this is likely because we have misunderstood what it is they were trying to do. Thus, Hadot's interpretations are often most illuminating specifically with respect to the features of ancient works that have long frustrated modern interpreters. A brief consideration of some of the hermeneutical lessons emphasized by Hadot will at once be recognized as valuable by anyone who has spent significant time reading in Sanskrit philosophical works such as we have considered in this dissertation; for anyone who has thus spent time with Sanskritic philosophical discourse will immediately recognize as familiar many of the significant features of ancient Western texts identified by Hadot.[23]

Certainly, the intermediate (and perhaps even the advanced) student of Sanskrit will immediately feel indicted by Hadot's observation that "the philosophical works of Greco-Roman antiquity almost always perplex the contemporary reader. I do not refer only to the general public, but even to specialists in the field. One could compile a whole anthology of complaints made against ancient authors by modern commentators, who reproach them for their bad writing, contradictions, and lack of rigor and coherence."[24] Having logged a great many hours in the company of others laboring to comprehend Sanskrit texts (and thus having come to appreciate how widely shared are the frustrations

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[23] That these features should be familiar will not be surprising to anyone who has been persuaded (by works such as Cabezón 1998) that "scholasticism" is a usefully applicable cross-cultural category, which can identify a range of discursive practices that have been widely occurrent; for many of the characteristics that Hadot identifies as definitive of philosophical discourse may be said to be the features also taken to define *scholasticism*.

[24] Hadot 1995: 61. All subsequent references are to this work, and will be given parenthetically in the text.

inherent in attempting this), I do not feel any shame in confessing that I myself have on more than one occasion been inclined to convict the objects of my study of incoherence. It ought, to be sure, to be a standard hermeneutical principle that, when trying to understand someone, one should as a matter of course attribute to them the best possible arguments, and accordingly to assume that apparent failures in sense or coherence reflect one's own failure to understand, rather than failings on the part of the subject. This is, however, often easier said than done. Where Hadot has been most perceptive is in his attention to the ways in which such hermeneutical failings on the part of modern interpreters of antiquity have stemmed particularly from failure to appreciate the significance of context and genre. Most basically, for example, he observes that

> Unlike their modern counterparts, none of these philosophical productions, even the systematic works, is addressed to everyone, to a general audience, but they are intended first of all for the group formed by members of the school.... Or else the work may be adapted to the spiritual level of the addressees. Not all the details of the system can be explained to beginners; many details can be revealed only to those further along the path. Above all, the work, even if it is apparently theoretical and systematic, is written not so much to inform the reader of a doctrinal content but to form him, to make him traverse a certain itinerary in the course of which he will make spiritual progress. (64)

This insight immediately brings to mind Candrakīrti's eloquently urging that only someone of fathomless compassion is finally a worthy vehicle for the teachings of emptiness. And certainly the elaborately worked-out "two truths" hermeneutic of Indian Buddhism (and the related notion that there have been multiple "turnings" of the "wheel of *dharma*")[25] has almost invariably been invoked as concerned to address those of different "spiritual level." However, Hadot's remark here just as compellingly brings to mind the entire Mīmāṃsaka discourse a tiny part of which we have surveyed; for the first of Jaimini's *Mīmāṃsāsūtras* famously says that "now, after that, there is the desire to know *dharma*" (*atha-ato dharmajijñāsā*).[26] Śabara's commentary on the first sūtra then

[25] The *locus classicus* for this notion is the *Saṃdhinirmocanasūtra*; see, e.g., Powers 1995, pp.138-141.

[26] Abhyankar 1976: 1. This then becomes a standard beginning to works of the Brahmanical *sūtra* genre, with the tradition of Uttara Mīmāṃsā immediately distinguishing itself from that of Pūrva Mīmāṃsā

undertakes a lengthy and exhaustive consideration of the simple words *atha-ataḥ* ("now, after that") – for it matters very much to the commentators of this tradition what kind of prior training one has had before beginning this stage of participation in the tradition. Thus, while the attention accorded these words may baffle the modern reader, it is crucial to realize that Jaimini's sūtra is not taken within the tradition as a vacuous topic-marker, but as raising a live question: *having done what* does one undertake to understand *dharma*?[27]

Hadot's observation, then, accords with what the texts we have surveyed themselves tell us: they are not written for just anybody, and we should not, therefore, pick them up and expect immediately to find that they are doing the same kind of work done in, say, university philosophy departments of the late twentieth century. Hadot's most interesting insight, though, is that this is particularly true insofar as the work in question may precisely be "about" constituting the reader as the kind of subject for whom it has some purchase – may be, as he says, "written not so much to inform the reader of a doctrinal content but to form him, to make him traverse a certain itinerary in the course of which he will make spiritual progress." (64) As Dignāga says, it is precisely because of his having already traversed that path that the Buddha has "become a *pramāṇa*" (*pramāṇabhūta*), and thus exemplifies the phenomenon of "reliable warrants" (*pramāṇa*) to the unique extent that he is worthy of "devotion" (*śraddhā*).[28] Before undertaking his discourse on *pramāṇas*, then, Dignāga found it important first to pay homage to the Buddha as the paradigm case thereof. In this way, Dignāga puts before his reader a

(specifically, as chiefly concerned with the "*vedānta*," i.e., the later portion of the Vedic literature that is paradigmatically represented by the *Upaniṣads*) when the former begins "now, after that, there is desire to know *brahman*" (*athāto brahmajijñāsā*).

[27] Śabara's commentary on this sūtra is at Abhyankar 1976: 2-13. Among the possibilities canvassed is that one must first have taken the ritual bath (*snāna*) that marks the end of the stage (*āśrama*) of celibate student (*brahmacārin*).

[28] Cf., Chapter 2, nn.101-102 for Dignāga's homage, and for studies particularly regarding the epithet "*pramāṇabhūta*" (the unpacking of which Dharmakīrti took to require an entire chapter of his *Pramāṇavārttika*).

statement of the goal to which his treatise is directed (the realization of Buddhahood), implicitly emphasizing that the study of *pramāṇa* is undertaken so that one can, like the Buddha, *become* one whose epistemic faculties reliably see things as they are (*pramāṇabhūta*).

Hadot further emphasizes that, related to this conception of discursive practices as making the reader "traverse a certain itinerary," we can infer as the relevant context for understanding philosophical works of antiquity an eminently *pedagogical* context. As Hadot stresses, it is chiefly this fact that frustrates the modern interpreter's desire for "systematicity" in the philosophical texts of antiquity.

> Although every written work is a monologue, the philosophical work is always implicitly a dialogue. The dimension of the possible interlocutor is always present within it.... For Aristotle's writings are indeed neither more nor less than lecture-notes; and the error of many Aristotelian scholars has been that they have forgotten this fact, and imagined instead that they were manuals or systematic treatises, intended to propose a complete exposition of a systematic doctrine. Consequently they have been astonished at the inconsistencies, and even contradictions, they have discovered between one writing and another. As Düring has convincingly shown, Aristotle's various *logoi* correspond to the concrete situations created by specific academic debates. (105)

Here again, the student of Sanskrit philosophy will immediately recognize this observation as relevant, *mutatis mutandis*, to the materials of her studies, as well. Indeed, the "dimension of the possible interlocutor" is generally *explicitly* present in Sanskrit philosophical texts, which are typically framed as dialogic exchanges between various philosophical opponents (*pūrvapakṣin*), and the authoritative voice of the tradition being advanced (styled the *siddhāntin*, "holder of the established conclusion"). What's more, foundational works of the sūtra genre are typically represented explicitly as consisting in a series of answers to implicit questions, which commentators then make explicit by introducing each sūtra with *avataraṇa*s – that is, introductory comments, usually in the

form of an explicit statement of the question to which each verse must be understood as the answer.[29]

In pointing this out, I do not wish to say that the works of Sanskrit philosophical discourse are never "systematic," or that they lack a governing architecture – indeed, very often they have a quite deliberate architecture, replicating in their structure some larger structure taken as axiomatic within the tradition.[30] But in a way, the sort of architecture which thus typifies these works recommends precisely the point I *am* urging: they are deployed and engaged as points of access to an entire tradition, such that the teaching of any one of them can provide the occasion for a broader rehearsal of the whole range of notions considered central to the tradition. Thus, the architecture of such works very often recapitulates and reinforces already internalized lists of key concepts (stages on the bodhisattva path, perfections, the eightfold path, and the like), making the study and teaching of these works again an act of catechesis; and this fact that they are structured according to already familiar frameworks points, in turn, to the origin of these works in

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[29] In this regard, the practice of Sanskritic commentators has something of interest vis-à-vis contemporary Anglophone discussions of *propositions*. Cf., Collingwood 1972: 29-33. Collingwood argues that a presupposition is either *relative* or *absolute*, explaining: "By a relative presupposition I mean one which stands relatively to one question as its presupposition and relatively to another question as its answer" (29). This is in the context of Collingwood's concern with the idea that "metaphysics" represents the "science of absolute presuppositions," where an absolute presupposition is "one which stands, relatively to all questions to which it is related, as a presupposition, never as an answer" (31). In light of this, "it is nonsense to say, as some modern logicians do say, that supposing is one of various 'attitudes' which we can take up towards a proposition, where a proposition means something which can be either true or false. This is merely a device for imposing on unwary readers the dogma ... that all presuppositions are relative, or that there are no absolute presuppositions" (33). The practice of Sanskritic commentators, then, evinces an awareness at least that the relative nature of certain propositions should be made explicit. Cf., Chapter 3, n.20, for one example of a passage where it is not altogether clear where the commentator's *avataraṇa* ends an the sūtra begins.

[30] Thus, for example, Candrakīrti's *Madhyamakāvatāra* is framed in terms of the ten *bodhisattvabhūmi* (*pramuditā, vimalā, prabhākarī, arciṣmatī, sudurjayā, abhimukī, duraṃgamā, acalā, sādhumatī, dharmameghā*), which give the works its chapter titles. Each of these is, in turn, indexed to the particular "perfection" (*pāramitā*) that is realized at each stage – and insofar as *prajñā* ("wisdom") is traditionally the sixth on the various lists of perfections, it is no coincidence that Candrakīrti's sixth chapter is philosophically the richest. Or consider Asaṅga's *Mahāyānasaṃgraha* (Lamotte 1973), which recapitulates such "path" progressions as *śīla, samādhi, prajñā*. Cf., also, the perceptive remarks of Kapstein (2001: 10-15) regarding the structure and progression of Śāntarakṣita's seemingly sprawling *Tattvasaṃgraha*.

pedagogical contexts in which the rehearsal of a standard list provides the occasion for the expositions that come down to us as textual artifacts.[31]

Finally, let us consider one instance of Hadot's hermeneutical insight that is (or ought to be) especially striking to students of Buddhist traditions. Many of Hadot's hermeneutical insights are advanced particularly with respect to his studies of the figures associated with the Stoic and Epicurean traditions. In this connection, Hadot's studies of the works of Marcus Aurelius are especially instructive. In particular, Hadot insists on the importance of understanding Marcus's *Meditations* as exemplifying the genre of *hypomnemata* ("notes written on a daily basis for the author's personal use"), with most interpreters having "anachronistically projected the literary prejudices of their own epoch back upon the *Meditations*." (179) Among other things, this has led modern interpreters to suppose that the *Meditations* represent notes towards a no-longer-extant systematic treatise, or to take them as a watershed moment in the history of autobiography and subjectivity. Those who opt for something like the latter reading have often shown a psychologistic bent, and have been particularly concerned to "diagnose" the angst that is surely evident in the "pessimistic" utterances of the *Meditations*. Surely, these interpreters suppose, these utterances afford us a window on the subjectivity of Marcus Aurelius, who must be judged to have been himself a very "pessimistic" person.

The idea of "pessimism" here is likely to be familiar to students of Buddhism, who will frequently have met with the characterization of the entire Buddhist tradition as "pessimistic," in view of its having stressed (as the very first "Noble Truth") that life is characterized by "suffering" or "unsatisfactoriness" (*duḥkha*). Hadot's response to these

[31] In this connection, consider, e.g., the likely origins of Abhidharma literature as "*mātṛkāḥ*," standardized lists or "matrices" which subsequently constituted the topic-headings of ever lengthier expositions. See Frauwallner 1995: 3-11, and Cox 1995: 7-11. For further reflections on what kinds of readers and reading situations can be inferred simply from formal and structural criteria, see Griffiths 1999 (and especially pp.109-147, which deal specifically with certain Indian Buddhist genres).

readings of Marcus Aurelius, it seems to me, is just as useful as a response to such characterizations of Buddhism:

> Such an accumulation of pessimistic utterances is indeed impressive. We should be careful, however, of deducing from them over-hasty conclusions about Marcus' own psychology. It is too facile for us to imagine that, like many modern authors, ancient writers wrote in order directly to communicate information, or the emotions they happened to be feeling.... Generally speaking, we can say that Marcus' seemingly pessimistic declarations are not expressions of his disgust or disillusion at the spectacle of life; rather, they are a *means* he employs in order to change his way of evaluating the events and objects which go to make up human existence. He does this by defining these events and objects as they really are – 'physically,' one might say – separating them from the conventional representations people habitually form of them.... Such definitions [thus] do not express Marcus' impressions; on the contrary, they correspond to a point of view intended to be *objective*.... all these declarations are the conscious, voluntary application of a method.... (186-7)

Steven Collins has appropriately urged what seems to me precisely the same point with respect to understanding the characteristically Buddhist emphasis on *duḥkha*: "... to see life as 'suffering' represents not an empirically derived judgement on life, but a goal-oriented soteriological project. It is an attitude which devalues ordinary life in comparison with *nibbāna*; an attitude in which any individual experience, however fortunate... is submerged in a wider reflection on the impermanence and conditionality of saṃsāric existence as a whole."[32] The characteristically Buddhist usage of *duḥkha* (as with Marcus's deployment of physical, "objective" descriptions of human bodies and activities), then, is a fundamentally *normative* one, meant finally to *cultivate* the realization that the things we typically value in life are not ultimately the most important things.

In the course of the lengthy passage from the *Prasannapadā* that provided us with our most important text for his critique of Buddhist Epistemology, Candrakīrti himself adduces (by way of an example of how the "venerable" deploy reasoning) an instance of such *cultivated* aversion:

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[32] Collins 1982: 192.

> For example, those in the throes of lust, having perverse understanding, do not perceive the actual impurity of the body, and having imputed an unreal aspect of beauty, [they] suffer. For the sake of the eradication of their lust, a manifestation of the Tathāgata or a god would describe in detail the defects of the body, which were previously concealed by the idea of beauty. [They will describe these, for example,] by way of such points as there being hairs on this body. And those [who had been lustful], based on the abandonment of that idea of beauty, would attain aversion.[33]

Among the salient (and typical) features of this passage is the elliptical reference to "such points as there being hairs on this body" (*santy asmin kāye keśā ityādinā*). The characteristic use of the particle *ādi* (which typically has the senses of "etc.," "and so forth") effectively signals that there is a standard list being adduced by way of the first term on the list. This in turn suggests that the ideal reader of this text can be expected to supply the list (and its relevant pedagogical context) that makes the elliptical reference meaningful. Significantly, the list here referred to is likely one drawn from the context of the practice of *smṛtyupasthāna* (Pali, *satipaṭṭhāna*), "the foundations of mindfulness," under the rubric of which, as Steven Collins suggests, "Buddhist practice as a whole can be subsumed."[34] The practitioner is first instructed to "effect mindfulness with regard to the body" (*kāye smṛtim upasthāpayati*), with this state to be brought about by sustained reflection on the fact that the body consists simply in an assemblage of parts, which are catalogued and described in the most unglamorous of terms.[35] Thus, when Candrakīrti refers elliptically to a Buddha's "describing in detail" such defects of the body as had previously been obscured by the erroneous idea of beauty, he in fact alludes to a specific meditative practice meant to *cultivate* disillusionment. Just as Hadot observed with respect to Marcus Aurelius, then, it would be misleading to take Candrakīrti's elliptical reference to the various "defects" of the body (and the larger Buddhist tradition's emphasis on "suffering") as warranting the ascription to Candrakīrti (much less to the

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[33] *Prasannapadā* 57.11-58.1; cf., Appendix II, n.7.

[34] Collins 1994: 74.

[35] Cf., e.g., the account in the *Śikṣāsamuccaya* (Bendall 1970: 228ff.).

abstract entity that is "Buddhism"!) of psychological states such as "pessimism" or "aversion"; for the ideas in play here are *normative*, and are deployed as parts of a larger effort at the cultivation of a certain kind of person.

This idea of *cultivation* is, finally, in keeping with a traditional emphasis on the progressive stage*s* of learning, which is conceived as consisting finally in the transformative internalization of what is to be learned. Indeed, "cultivation" can here render *bhāvanā*, one of the Sanskrit terms most commonly used for what is sometimes translated as "meditation."[36] *Cultivation* is a more apt rendering, though, insofar as the word is derived from the causative stem of √*bhū*, "to be." *Bhāvanā*, then, refers to any act of "bringing into being," "actualizing," "making real," and such acts are represented in the Indian Buddhist tradition as the culminating stage of practice. Thus, on one standard schematization, proper practice yields various kinds of "wisdom" (*prajñā*) progressively resulting from increasingly subtle ways of appropriating the material: the kind produced by study or "hearing" (*śrutamayi prajñā*), the kind produced by "reflection" (*cintāmayi prajñā*), and the kind produced by "cultivation" (*bhāvanāmayi prajñā*). According to Vasubandhu's account of these, "one desirous of knowing the truths" taught by the Buddha (*satyāni draṣṭukāma*) must develop all three of these stages of learning, with the first only touching on the words (*nāmālambanā kila śrutamayi prajñā*), the second on the meanings of the word (*nāmārthālambanā cintāmayi*), and the last finally concerning the *referents* of the teaching (*arthālambanaiva bhāvanāmayi*).[37]

This scheme is well known by Candrakīrti. Commenting on the beginning of chapter 24 of Nāgārjuna's *MMK* (i.e., the part of the chapter which anticipates the

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[36] Cf., *inter alia*, Kapstein 2001: 14-15.

[37] *Abhidharmakośa* 6.5, and *bhāṣya* thereon (Pradhan 1975: 334-5). In a similar vein, one standard schematization of the bodhisattva path in terms of various *mārgas* ("paths") posits *bhāvanāmārga* ("the path of cultivation") as penultimate, surpassed only by *niṣṭhā*- or *aśaikṣa-mārga*, the point at which no further training is necessary. *Bhāvanāmārga* in turn succeeds *darśanamārga*, "the path of seeing" – i.e., the point at which the truth of the doctrine is cognitively understood, but not yet internalized. This is in turn preceded by two previous stages (*saṃbhāramārga* and *prayogamārga*), during which one must first develop the requisite virtues to make even the simple comprehension of the doctrine fully possible.

objection that if everything is empty, then the Four Noble Truths cannot obtain), Candrakīrti attributes to a Buddhist interlocutor the charge that, given the emptiness of the Noble Truths, it will not be clear what is to be cultivated and what is to be abandoned (*bhāvanāprahātavya*).[38] Amplifying Nāgārjuna's rejoinder in the second half of the chapter (i.e., it is only *because* of emptiness that the path is possible), Candrakīrti wraps the chapter up by approvingly quoting the *Dhyāyitamuṣṭisūtra*, which adduces a standard account of the actions to be taken with respect to each of the Four Truths: "suffering is to be thoroughly understood, [its] arising is to be abandoned, [its] cessation is to be directly realized, [and] the path is to be cultivated."[39] Candrakīrti ends this rejoinder, in other words, by insisting that it is only *because* of what Nāgārjuna has recognized that the path is finally to be "cultivated." Elsewhere, he brings such language specifically into relation to what we have seen to be a term that figures prominently in the philosophically central 18th verse of the *MMK*'s 24th chapter, saying that "the middle path is to be cultivated (*madhyamāpratipad bhāvanīya*) by those desirous of liberation...."[40]

What such practice finally "brings into being" is, as I have put it, persons who have been constituted as the kinds of subjects whose "mental discourse" is thoroughly imbued with the categories of their tradition. In thus choosing an image that indexes the practice of "cultivation" (*bhāvanā*) to a specifically discursive sort of activity (one of catechesis or, we might say, "entextualization"), I have in fact borrowed a term from the Indian Buddhist tradition: *manojalpa*, which is what I have rendered as "mental discourse." While this is not a term that figures all that prominently in the tradition, there

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[38] Cf., *Prasannapadā* 480.1, 481.2, 484.10, 485.8.

[39] *Prasannapadā* 516.17-18: "*duḥkhaṃ parijñātavyaṃ, samudayaḥ prahātavyo, nirodhaḥ sākṣātkartavyo mārgo bhāvayitavyaḥ.*" The same account occurs throughout Buddhist literature; cf., e.g., *Abhidharmakośabhāṣyam ad Abhidharmakośa* 7.7 (Pradhan 1976: 394), and Lessing and Wayman 1968: 44-45 (for a citation by the dGe-lugs-pa scholar mKhas-grub-rje).

[40] *Prasannapadā* 276.9-11: *etac ca āryākṣayamatinirdeśādiṣu vistareṇa boddhavyam iti / bhāvābhāvadarśanadvayaprasaṅgo yāvat tāvat saṃsara ity avetya mumukṣubhir etad darśanadvayanirāsena sadbhir madhyamāpratipad bhāvanīya yathāvad iti.*

is nevertheless a very interesting occurrence of it in the commentaries to the *Mahāyānasaṃgraha* of Asaṅga. The eighth chapter of this text includes a lengthy verse exposition of the idea of *nirvikalpakajñāna*, "non-constructive awareness." Among the difficult things to explain is how the eminently *constructive* activities involved in practicing "cultivation" can be causally related to the arising of *non*-constructive awareness.

While Asaṅga's account of this may not satisfactorily explain the causation of such awareness, his attempt nevertheless brings into play an interestingly *discursive* understanding of how "cultivation" takes place. Thus, he explains that "The basis of the nonconstructive awareness of bodhisattvas is properly applied attention (*yoniśo manasikāra*), which is accompanied by the [mental] discourse [which comes from] dispositions related to hearing."[41] This is the first of two verses which treat the different "conditions" (*pratyaya*) for the arising of nonconstructive awareness, and the basic point is that one must hear the words of others if one is properly to undertake the Buddhist path. Such hearing then produces dispositions (*vāsanās*) which make possible the "properly applied attention" which finally causes nonconstructive awareness. In the commentaries (the *Bhāṣya* of Vasubandhu, and the *Upanibandhana* of *Asvabhāva), this "properly applied attention" is homologized to the "discourse-possessing" dispositions; that is, "properly applied attention" is said to be a species of *internalized* "discourse." In other words, the causal progression goes like this: one hears the words of others (*gzhan dag las sgra*) (i.e., words concerning the Mahāyāna); by *cultivating* the insights thus gained (*de goms pa'i phyir*; Skt., *bhāvanāyāḥ*), a specific potency or efficacy (*nus pa khyad par can*; Skt., *śaktiviśeṣa*) arises, in the form of a latent disposition; from this disposition, there arises a "mental discourse" (*yid kyi brjod pa*; Skt., *manojalpa*) which is

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[41] *Mahāyānasaṃgraha* 8.4. The Sanskrit of this is no longer extant; the Tibetan is to be found in Lamotte 1973, Tome I: 75: *byang chub sems dpa' rnams kyi shes, rnam par rtog pa med pa'i gzhi, thos pa'i bag chags brjod bcas pa'i, yid byed de ni tshul bzhin no.*

"attention" (*yid la byed pa*).[42] Here, then, we have a succinct expression of the view that religious practice consists in being properly *entextualized*, such that the authoritative religious instruction (of which this text is itself one instance!) which is heard becomes *cultivated* to the extent that its terms then constitute the subject's own internal or *mental* discourse (*manojalpa*). Thus, while nonconstructive awareness itself is characterized by absence of discursive thought, it nonetheless requires as its productive cause (*kārakahetupratyaya*) that one first have become the kind of subject whose "mental discourse" (*manojalpa*) is constituted by such terms as this very text is concerned to inculcate.

Clearly, this account in terms of *manojalpa* represents one elaboration of something like the standard progression from the kind of wisdom produced by "study" (*śrutamayi prajñā*) through that produced by "cultivation" (*bhāvanāmayi prajñā*), and simply serves to make clear what is already implicit in the traditional progression: the transformative internalization of the tradition's goals is understood as continuous with (and causally related to) such initially discursive practices as study and reading (or "hearing," as this account has it). It is, then, with this view in mind that engagement with texts such as those of Dignāga and Candrakīrti is usefully understood as something like a process of catechesis; that is, the very exercise of reading, hearing, or otherwise studying (or, for that matter, *writing*) these works can be seen as an exercise in the proper deployment of the conceptual terms of the tradition. That is, the full realization of the tradition's goals is here represented as requiring, among other things, that one systematically "cultivate" oneself as the kind of subject whose "mental discourse" is

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[42] *Mahāyānasaṃgrahopanibandhana* (*Theg pa chen po bsdus pa'i bshad sbyar*, Toh.4051: sDe dge bsTan 'gyur, *sems tsam*, vol. *ri*, fol.190b-296a), 267a6: *gzhan dag las sgra thos pa de ni mnyan par bya ba yin pa'i phyir thos pa ste. gzhan ni ma yin no. de goms pa'i phyir nus pa khyad par can ni bag chags te. de'i rgyu las byung ba yid kyi brjod pa yid la byed pa'o.* So, too, the *bhāṣya* (*Theg pa chen po chen po bsdus pa'i 'grel pa*, Toh.4050, vol. *ri*, 121b-190a), 176a1-2: *gang gzhan gyis bstan pa thos pa la bag chags so. gang bag chag kyi rgyu las ni yid kyi brjod pa yid la byed pa ste. de ni tshul bzhin yid la byed pa zhes bya'o.* Cf., Lamotte 1973: Tome II: 235.

constituted by the analytic terms of the tradition – in which case, the discursive practice of studying philosophy can be seen as part of the same world in which, say, Tibetan nomads spin prayer wheels and repeat *mantras*, similarly internalizing through repetition a comprehensive framework for appropriating the world. It is in this sense that even such philosophically sophisticated works as we have considered are, in Hadot's words, best understood as "written not so much to inform the reader of a doctrinal content but to form him, to make him traverse a certain itinerary in the course of which he will make spiritual progress."

6.vi. But is this "philosophy"? Concluding reflections on the proper work of reason

If (as I think is clearly the case) the hermeneutical lessons Hadot has developed from his engagement with the works of Western antiquity are relevant to the study of Indian philosophy, then we would do well to take seriously some of the apparently "non-philosophical" features of texts such as we have considered in this dissertation – features such as Śabara's devoting considerable attention to whether one must have ritually concluded celibate study with a bath before developing the "desire to know dharma" (*dharmajijñāsā*); such as Dignāga's beginning his systematic exposition of epistemology with an expression of devotion to the Buddha; and such as Candrakīrti's avowing that his own arguments are those of a person "the eye of whose intellect is obscured by the cataracts of ignorance," and who must therefore finally defer to "the gnosis of yogins, as [that is made clear] in the scriptures." In emphasizing such features, however, I do not wish simply to have labored the point that, for example, Buddhists typically *enjoined* practice (with its being a commonplace perhaps particularly among Western converts to Buddhism thus to urge that it is not enough "merely" to "study" Buddhism). Rather, engagement with philosophical discourse is, within the context of these traditions, *itself* a

practice, and we are likely to misunderstand the *use* of such textual artifacts as have come down to us if do not appreciate this.

Among the things we thus risk misunderstanding, though, is finally something that even contemporary academic philosophers should be prepared to recognize as a conventionally "philosophical" point: the fact that the works we have studied here are best understood as already *engaged* in actualizing the respective goals of their traditions (rather than being simply philosophical prolegomena to that task) can, if fully appreciated, facilitate the realization that we cannot finally and definitively adjudicate between the thinkers we have surveyed, since their arguments give us no purchase on the various axiological commitments already presupposed in what is, I have here been stressing, already goal-oriented discursive activity. To engage with these works in the way that is incumbent upon what we can credibly infer to be their ideal readers – to study Mīmāṃsā only after living the traditional life of a celibate student, to study the *Pramāṇasamuccaya* only after offering devotion to the Buddha, to reflect on emptiness only having wept at the thought of the Buddha's fathomless compassion – is already to understand them in a way that is only finally possible for one who shares the axiological commitments of whichever tradition is thus entered into. Insofar as such is the case, it can cogently be claimed that, while one who is external to any of these traditions may not have compelling reason to choose to claim one or the other, it is also the case that none who has not understood them (as it were) from the inside out has compelling reason finally to judge them irrational.[43]

And this, finally, is why I have chosen to conclude this dissertation by developing the points I have here been making. The student of Sanskrit philosophy, recognizing my

[43] Something like this is, it seems to me, the upshot of Wittgenstein's thinking with respect to religion; cf., e.g., Wittgenstein 1966: 53-72. It seems to me that Lindbeck 1984 represents the working out of a similar idea. There are, I think, important problems with both of these accounts, but they nevertheless seem to me to capture something significant about our epistemic situation (both specifically vis-à-vis religion, and perhaps more generally).

growing sympathy for the positions I have progressively developed, might well have begun to suspect that the structure of this dissertation is based on one familiar in Indian philosophy – that I have sketched Dignāga's Buddhist Epistemology as a position to be refuted (*pūrvapakṣa*); that the Mīmāṃsaka doctrine of intrinsic validity then represents an intermediate position (*uttarapakṣa*) that successfully undermines the initial position, but that ultimately fails to carry the day; and that Candrakīrti's Madhyamaka finally represents the "established conclusion" (*siddhānta*), the position I am authoritatively commending as finally worthy of adoption. But in fact, this is not what I would finally have us conclude from these studies. Instead, I would commend the conclusion that what is, in the end, most striking about the various philosophical systems we have considered is the extent to which each of them affords a highly articulated perspective on a highly ramified tradition – and that in light of the rich elaboration of these various traditions, there will always be further argumentative moves available in defense of the various and conflicting intuitions underlying these traditions.

To be sure, I do not wish to minimize the philosophical purchase of the Mīmāṃsaka and Mādhyamika critiques of Buddhist Epistemology. As I suggested in concluding Chapter 2, Buddhist Epistemologists such as Dignāga can plausibly be characterized as having raised the question of justification – that is, as having adumbrated a peculiarly technical account of what would warrant us in holding any belief, and as having at least held out the possibility that only the satisfaction of these technical desiderata entitles us to claim anything like "certainty" (*niścaya*). I have already developed, in concluding Chapter 3, a more or less comprehensive statement of what I take to be the strengths of the Mīmāṃsaka argument, as well as some points with regard to which it might be pressed. It now seems to me that we might appreciate the purchase of both the Mīmāṃsaka and Mādhyamika arguments against the Epistemologists' approach by considering briefly an account that can be characterized as exemplifying

some of the characteristic moves of both of these approaches – specifically, that of John Henry Newman, whose *Essay in Aid of a Grammar of Assent* (1870) involves epistemological elements that seem to presage William Alston's account of prima facie justification, as well as something like a transcendental appeal to ordinary language against radical skepticism. Recall, then, that I adduced a passage from Newman in chapter 3. I did so with respect to a passage from Uṃveka, who argued that we cannot be said willfully to *produce* doubt regarding our cognitions, in which case we are under no compulsion to press doubts so far as to consider true only those beliefs that have been rendered completely secure from any possible doubt; and I noted that Uṃveka's appeal here represents an appeal to common sense (i.e., to what is *lokaprasiddha*) much as we would see Candrakīrti developing.[44]

Newman's *Grammar* represents, I think, a sustained development of a similar pair of points – that is, of the points that only reasonable doubts should be thought to require displacement, and that *what* constitutes a reasonable doubt is to be decided with reference simply to how we typically proceed in the world. Newman develops these points by offering a strictly empirical account (a *descriptive psychology*, as he says) of the nature of belief – that is, of how it is that we arrive at beliefs, and how it is that the beliefs thus produced can reasonably be held. His point is to show that religious beliefs are significantly like *all* of our beliefs – i.e., that they do not come to be held in a different way from other beliefs, and (more importantly) that they are not somehow less demonstrable than other beliefs. The point in showing this is to argue that the skeptic who demands the justification of religious beliefs can only make this demand at the expense of calling *all* beliefs into question – a consequence with manifestly undesirable consequences.

[44] Chapter 3, nn.170-171.

To the extent that Newman's focus is empirical, he bears comparison with Locke; for Locke similarly ventured what he took to be an entirely descriptive account of how, in fact, we operate in the world of knowledge. Such a comparison is, however, most instructive for the sharp contrasts it brings to light. Locke, an epistemological foundationalist, conflates the question of *how we come to hold beliefs* with the question of *how we know they are true*. That is, Locke's reduction of all knowledge claims to those involving foundational "intuitive certainty" is, in effect, a reduction of *truth* conditions to *conditions for believing*. In other words, when Lock argues that all of our knowledge has its foundations in "intuited" knowledge events, he is simply arguing that we can take as most certainly *known* what *appears most clearly* to us. Thus, he mistakes our *reasons for believing* something for the kinds of reasons we can offer for its being *true*. As Newman will say, he confuses *assent* with *inference*.[45]

In sharp contrast, Newman recognizes that the question of how or why we *believe* something is completely independent of how or why it might be true. As he says, "a proposition, be it ever so keenly apprehended, may be true or may be false."[46] Newman systematizes this distinction by way of a distinction between *assent* and *inference*. That is, he wants to be clear about the difference between *what we are doing when we believe something* (assent), and how it is that we might go about justifying that belief (inference). "Assent," for Newman, is characterized by its unqualified status. That is, of the various modes in which a proposition can be apprehended, *assent* is that mode which is characterized by one's taking a proposition unreservedly as true. As a paradigm case of a proposition to which people generally assent, Newman offers the example, "I shall die."

[45] We might say that the distinction Newman draws here is analogous to the distinction that Buddhist Epistemologists (following Dignāga) make between *svārthānumāna* ("inference for one's own sake"), and *parārthānumāna* ("inference for the sake of another"), where the latter denotes the dialectical procedures for, as it were, causing another to perform an inference. Note, however, that under the heading of *svārthānumāna*, these Buddhists still elaborate an eminently technical account of warrant, whereas Newman's "assent" instead denotes ordinary processes of belief-formation.

[46] Newman 1870: 80.

Newman takes it (reasonably, it seems to me) as beyond doubt that most people would assent to this proposition without reservation.

Now, Locke, as a foundationalist, in effect held that our assents varied as a function of the grounds that produce them. And, insofar as he conflated the question of what *produces* assent with that of what makes it *true*, Locke will only credit belief-forming practices that manifestly *issue* in true assents. Thus, for example, he faults syllogistic reasoning insofar as nobody in fact *uses* syllogisms to arrive at the beliefs they hold. Newman, in contrast, understands that this is as we should expect; indeed, he specifically argues that inferences *cannot* produce our assents. This is because our assents are characterized by their *unreservedly* taking something as true; but inferences, Newman persuasively argues, can only ever yield probabilistic conclusions. Indeed, inferences are conditional virtually by definition – for to state a proposition as the conclusion to an inference just is to state that proposition as *conditional* (as depending) upon the inference's premise. And, somewhere along the way, our chains of inferential reasoning will always terminate in premises that are simply assumed to be true.

Newman discusses this fact under the heading of a discussion of "first principles." Newman appreciates that our "first principles" (and under this heading, we might include beliefs of the sort that I have been characterizing as "axiological") are held for reasons that are almost entirely arbitrary and contingent – as a function, for example, of complex factors having to do with our historical location, individual psychology, education and religious training, etc. Insofar, then, as inferences must start with *some* premises, and insofar as not all premises can be themselves the conclusions of other arguments, some of them are simply assumed – and this is what makes inferences necessarily conditional. Of course, it is in regard to first principles and premises that Locke thought he could show that we can take as foundational those first principles that are "intuitively certain" – that are, in other words, simply self-evident. Against this, Newman quite insightfully points

out that "self-evident" is simply what we call those claims that "are evident in no other way."[47] Thus, when Locke claims to have found premises that can be foundational insofar as they are "self-evident," he must simply trust that his readers share his intuitions about what it is that is thus "self-evident" (i.e., evident in no other way!). And even if Locke's readers share his intuitions in regard to this, Newman can persuasively rejoin that the "self-evidence" of these first principles accounts only for *why we believe them* – it tells us nothing about why (or indeed, *whether*) they are true.

It is at this point in his argument that Newman's project shows its affinities with some "ordinary language" philosophers (and here, I have chiefly in mind P. F. Strawson and J. L. Austin, whose arguments, and their affinities with those of Candrakirti, were sketched in Chapter 5). As we saw, these philosophers developed a sort of transcendental argument against the possibility of radical skepticism. Briefly, this argument starts from the non-controversial premise that there is meaningful discourse in the world; and, it is argued, a *condition of the possibility* of such discourse is that we assent to certain minimal claims (e.g., there are other minds, our perceptual cognitions are generally trustworthy, people generally mean what they say, etc.). Thus, when the radical skeptic argues that we cannot be sure of precisely such minimal assents, she involves herself in a contradiction – for in fact, if a condition of the possibility of the skeptic's own discourse (i.e., the discourse which ostensibly expresses the skeptic's doubt) is precisely that she *makes* such assents, then what the skeptic claims to doubt cannot really be doubted. If the skeptic's demand for justification cannot be met even with regard to the kinds of minimal assents that make even the skeptic's own expression of doubt possible, then it is not the religious believer whose assent is unreasonable; rather, *what is unreasonable is the skeptic's demand for justification*.

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[47] *Ibid.*: 216.

Newman's attention to our ordinary language and practices is pertinent to the question: if our assents are not produced by inferential reasoning, then how *do* they come to be held? And his empirical account of how we typically behave in matters of belief recommends an answer that is simple but compelling: *we just do*. That is, his empirical focus allows him pretty readily to win assent to the observation that, in fact, people assent all the time (to, e.g., simple claims such as "I shall die"); and they do so despite the impossibility of their ever mounting decisive demonstrations of the reasonableness of their belief. What is empirically the case, then, is that with respect to *all* kinds of beliefs, we get by in the only way that we can – i.e., we just exercise our own best judgment. Newman considers, in this regard, the example of various historians, who come to differing interpretations of, say, some event in ancient history. Now we're all aware that comparably trained and accomplished historians quite frequently hold sharply divergent opinions about how best to interpret the data that is similarly available to them – and we don't (at least not usually!) judge that one or the other of them must be *irrational* in holding the conclusions they hold. Rather, we typically take into account the great complexity of the matters in question, and simply make our own best judgment.[48] We exercise, that is, what Newman called our "illative sense" – our ratiocinative capacities, which start (as they must) from the first principles we happen to hold.

It seems to me that it would be not at all inappropriate to express Newman's account here in terms more familiar to contemporary readers from Gadamer: just as with Newman's "first principles," so too does Gadamer urge that our "preunderstandings" or "prejudices" do not *impede* objective inquiry; rather, they are all that make it *possible*.[49] Thus, Gadamer urges that the idea of the "hermeneutic circle" as made familiar by

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[48] Cf., *ibid.*: 284-290.

[49] Gadamer 1989. See especially pp.265-307, on "The Elevation of the Historicity of Understanding to the Status of a Hermeneutic Principle."

Dilthey is best understood not as expressing a methodological point, but as characterizing the "ontological structure of understanding":

> The anticipation of meaning that governs our understanding of a text is not an act of subjectivity, but proceeds from the commonality that binds us to the tradition. But this commonality is constantly being formed in our relation to tradition. Tradition is not simply a permanent precondition; rather, we produce it ourselves inasmuch as we understand, participate in the evolution of tradition, and hence further determine it ourselves. Thus the circle of understanding is not a "methodological" circle, but describes an element of the ontological structure of understanding.[50]

So, too, for Newman: Religious beliefs are rationally held insofar as they come to be held in the only that way that *any* beliefs can come to be held – that is, based on the "first principles" or, as Gadamer has it, the "prejudices" bequeathed to us by our historical location. And if the truth of religious beliefs cannot finally be *demonstrated* by coercive inferences, they are no worse off in that regard than any other beliefs – even such minimal beliefs as are shared by the skeptic who claims that religious beliefs require justification. And again, if the skeptic's own beliefs cannot be justified in the way that the skeptic thinks is required of religious beliefs, then it is not the religious beliefs that are unreasonable, but the skeptic's persistent demand for justification. What is irrational, in other words, is supposing that belief must be secured from the most persistent sort of doubt, and Newman's expression of this point might just as easily have come from the pen of philosopher Michael Williams:

> ...there are writers who seem to have gone far beyond this reasonable scepticism, laying down as a general proposition that we have no right in philosophy to make any assumption whatever, and that we ought to begin with a universal doubt. This, however, is of all assumptions the greatest, and to forbid assumptions universally is to forbid this one in particular. Doubt itself is a positive state, and implies a definite habit of mind, and thereby necessarily involves a system of principles and doctrines all its own. Again, if nothing is to be assumed, what is our very method of reasoning but an assumption? and what our nature itself?[51]

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[50] *Ibid.*: 293.

[51] Newman 1870: 294; cf., Williams 1996.

As we have seen, Candrakīrti, having anticipated the Buddhist Epistemologist's demand that he show the epistemic credentials of his position, rather similarly rejoined, saying, "If we had anything at all like certainty (*yadi kaścinniścayo nāma-asmākaṃ syāt*), then there would be [a question of its being] based on a reliable warrant, or not based on a reliable warrant. But we don't!" While I noted that particularly in the section dealing with perception, Candrakīrti's engagement with this interlocutor involves moves strikingly similar to those of the ordinary language philosophers, I also developed an account according to which Candrakīrti's is not simply a transcendental argument from ordinary language; rather, his argument is ultimately in the service of what I characterized as a properly metaphysical claim, one with certain entailments about *why* it is misleading to suppose we could get behind ordinary language to something more real. Thus, Candrakīrti clearly wants to argue not only that his claims (i.e., regarding emptiness) are rationally held, but that they are *true* – a point we saw him express by invoking the widely repeated Buddhist dictum that "whether or not Tathāgatas arise, the nature (*dharmatā*) of phenomena (*dharmāṇām*) abides," which all but states a realist conception of truth.[52] And of course, the Mīmāṃsakas, too, understood themselves to have secured the unparalleled (because uniquely unfalsifiable) authority of the Veda.

In this regard, then, it is pertinent to note (insofar as I have adduced Newman as nicely expressing what both Mīmāṃsakas and Mādhyamikas might cogently claim to have argued contra the Buddhist Epistemologists) what Newman appreciated and Locke did not: his strictly empirical description of our epistemic situation remains neutral with respect to the question of whether beliefs might be *true*, which is logically independent of

[52] Cf., Chapter 5, n.51. In Chapter 5, I also noted (n.83) Gamwell's appeal to a realist conception of truth contra the critic who (like Barry Stroud) urges that transcendental arguments can only tell us what we must *suppose*: "Perhaps it will be objected that we can never get beyond what we think is conceivable in order to identify what is in truth conceivable. But to say that this circumstance discredits the distinction is to say that there is no distinction between what we think and what is true...."

how they happen to have come to be held. This distinction is perhaps particularly significant with respect to the understanding of transcendental arguments, and we would here do well to reiterate Gamwell's statement of a related distinction specifically with respect to such arguments:

> In contrast to factual or logically contingent claims, a priori claims are said to be logically necessary and, in that sense, invariable or certain. But the question is whether this logical meaning of certainty is the same certainty as that whose achievement is inconsistent with human fallibility. A defense of transcendental understanding might further distinguish between *logical* and *epistemological* certainty, such that understandings claiming to be logically certain are also epistemologically fallible, and only epistemological certainty is impossible.... I claim logical necessity, and I concede epistemological uncertainty. The affirmation of fallibility is not a statement about the condition that I take to be transcendental, namely, that it has an alternative; this affirmation is rather a claim about the claimer, namely, that I may be wrong.[53]

In other words, if (as I think is the case) transcendental arguments typically arouse suspicion owing partly to the peculiar sort of their claim to necessity, the suspicion may often be misplaced; for what is chiefly being resisted, I suggest, is the idea that the person offering the argument is claiming *herself* to be certain, that the mode of necessity somehow attaches (in the form, perhaps, of infallibility) *to her*. But if it is recognized that a transcendental claim may be quite compatible with a position of epistemic humility, then the peculiarly strong aversion to transcendental arguments may be seen as baseless.

My final conclusion is not, however, that we ought all to become Mādhyamikas, or that we would at least be better off becoming Mīmāṃsakas than adopting Dignāga's Buddhist epistemology. If (as is the case) I have sympathetically elaborated the Mīmāṃsaka doctrine of intrinsic validity as a critique of Buddhist Epistemology, it is only because I commend this critique of epistemology as worthy of more serious consideration than it has generally received. But if (as I think is true) these arguments persuasively show that the ritual concerns of Mīmāṃsakas are rationally entertained (and

[53] See Chapter 5, n.83.

the related beliefs rationally held), they nevertheless do not give us any reason for *choosing* to adopt them as our own, if we are not already Mīmāṃsakas. Only the sharing of the characteristically *vaidika* axiological commitments of Mīmāṃsakas can do so – but the people most likely to share these are *vaidikas*, and so people not in need of choosing to adopt these in the first place.

Moreover, if I have developed Candrakīrti's position at greatest length (and with greatest sympathy), that is chiefly because the principled character of his refusal of epistemology has not, in my view, been sufficiently appreciated. And it is in attempting to characterize the logically distinctive nature of his arguments that I have developed a rational reconstruction that involves what seems to me another insufficiently appreciated idea, that of transcendental arguments. In this regard, my view is that it has been worth developing Candrakīrti's critique in conversation with that of the Mīmāṃsakas partly because the difference between these two critiques particularly shows the logical distinctiveness of Candrakīrti's argument. That they are logically distinctive can perhaps best be appreciated by recognizing that Candrakīrti might, in fact, just as well have adopted Mīmāṃsaka epistemology (i.e., as providing an adequate account of our conventional epistemic practices) as that of the Naiyāyikas (which is, we saw, what he finally endorsed contra the Buddhist Epistemologist). And indeed, I have adduced Newman as having thematized aspects of both approaches partly insofar as he might be said to have combined the major intuitions of both critiques. That Candrakīrti might have been well served by Mīmāṃsaka epistemology is true insofar as the direct realism of the Mīmāṃsaka account has, I think, a plausible claim to representing something like the "common-sense" view. Of course, Candrakīrti is highly unlikely to have countenanced even a limited endorsement of so major a part of the Mīmāṃsaka project, insofar as it is deployed in the service of soteriological goals that may be said to be virtually antithetical

to those of the Indian Buddhist tradition, and he is compellingly unlikely to have gone anywhere near a project that involved appeals to "transcendence" (*apauruṣeyatva*).[54]

This historical fact notwithstanding, to the extent that Mīmāṃsaka epistemology can plausibly be characterized as capturing something like a common-sense understanding of our epistemic practices, Candrakīrti might have endorsed this as preferable to the peculiarly technical account of Buddhist Epistemologists such as Dignāga. The logically distinctive character of Candrakīrti's argument would then be reflected in the fact that this would only get him part of what he needs; for Candrakīrti is not finally interested in saying *what* our conventional epistemic practices are like (except that they are mutually interdependent), but in saying *why* it is the case that there can be nothing more real than our conventions. And, as I have emphasized, Candrakīrti's is finally a metaphysical claim in regard to this; that is, the abstract state of affairs of "essencelessness" (*niḥsvabhāvatā*) obtains universally, which means that "there does not exist anything at all that is not dependently originated."[55] Insofar as our conventions are not independent perspectives *on* the dependently originated phenomena of the world, but simply further examples *of* such, existing *conventionally* becomes a phenomenon of the same order as existing *dependently*. And insofar as such is the only way that anything *can* exist, it is incoherent to demand (as Candrakīrti thinks the Buddhist Epistemologist does) warrants whose establishment is "independent" or "essential" (*svābhāvikī*). His is, then, an argument whose conclusion, if true, is *necessarily* true – and this because the conclusion of Candrakīrti's argument (viz., "there does not exist anything at all that is not dependently originated") is at the same time proposed as a *condition of the possibility* even of the Epistemologist's framing his objection.

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[54] Cf., though, Chapter 5, n.51, for Kumārila's (misleading) invocation of the "whether or not Tathāgatas arise" dictum against the Buddhists, and on the subject of Buddhist notions of the "transcendence" of *buddhavacana*.

[55] Cf., *MMK* 24.19a-b: *apratītyasamutpanno dharmaḥ kaścin na vidyate....*

Nevertheless, just as I concluded with respect to the Mīmāṃsaka arguments, so, too, would we have to conclude with respect to Candrakīrti: while those who share Candrakīrti's intuitions regarding the Buddhist reductionist project might find his arguments compelling, he does not give us good reasons for *choosing* to hold the beliefs he commends. Moreover, if Bernard Williams is right (and if Newman is), perhaps *no* argument can give us such purchase. Certainly, it is indisputably the case that, as an empirical matter, no arguments in history *have* given all rational persons good reason to adopt their conclusions, at least if we are to judge by whether or not they have succeeded, rhetorically, in persuading all who have received them. But to say this is not to make a point that can properly be held against these (or any other) arguments. One can only fault arguments for failing to persuade people (or, conversely, fault believers for failing to have adopted their beliefs as the result of justifying themselves by means of argument) given the view that *what arguments are for is to produce beliefs*.

This is an eminently *epistemic* sense of what arguments are for (and of how we know they are valid or true). To suppose that such is what arguments are for is, like Locke, to conflate the question of *how we come to hold beliefs* with the question of *how we can know they are true*. Committed to this view, one is likely to think that chains of reasoned arguments must function to express how it is that our beliefs unfold, as it were, in a "forward" direction – hence philosophers like Locke fault syllogistic reasoning precisely and only to the extent that it does not reflect the process by which people actually arrive at their beliefs. Against such a view, it is proper to urge that the question of a belief's validity or truth is, in fact, completely independent of the question of how it happens to have been caused – and, accordingly, that to it is a mistake to understand the role of argument as being that of *producing* belief. But in that case, reasoning and argumentation are best understood as functioning, as it were, *backward* along chains of belief, to examine whether the beliefs are *in principle* valid (i.e., *independent of how they*

happen to have been caused). If (as I think) such a view is reasonable, then an epistemic sense of argument such as Locke's can only be held at considerable expense. For in fact, a realist conception of truth can be said to consist in its taking the truth of something to be a matter quite independent of whether or not that truth happens to be *known* by anybody. "Whether or not Tathāgatas arise, the nature of phenomena abides."

The proper work of reason was, I think, appreciated by all of the thinkers we have considered, insofar as they understood their respective philosophical projects as practices undertaken in the context of prior commitment to traditions of reasoning – prior commitment, in the case of Mīmāṃsakas, to the view that inquiry into dharma is necessarily preceded by the living of a certain lifestyle, and prior commitment, in the case of Candrakīrti, to respect for the fathomless compassion exemplified by the Buddha. In the final analysis, then, our epistemic situation is sufficiently complex that, following Newman (and Gamwell), we can conclude without contradiction that Mīmāṃsakas like Kumārila and Mādhyamikas like Candrakīrti have cogently argued that their beliefs are rationally held, *and* that they are entitled moreover to consider those beliefs *true* – and yet (also without contradiction), just as rationally opt not to adopt them as our own. Given the nature and inevitability of "first principles" (Newman) or "prejudices" (Gadamer), the question of justification cannot finally be such as to disqualify the beliefs developed in the context of highly articulated and ramified traditions of human reasoning. In the end, I only hope that my own first principles and prejudices have not prevented me, but rather have helped enable me, to hear and understand something of what these Indian thinkers have had to say.

APPENDIX I
A Translation of Pārthasārathimiśra's *Svataḥprāmāṇyanirṇaya*

Introduction

Svataḥprāmāṇyanirṇaya ("Ascertainment of intrinsic validity") is the second chapter of Pārthasārathimiśra's *Nyāyaratnamālā*, an independent work that addresses the principal themes of the Bhāṭṭa school of Pūrva Mīmāṃsā (i.e., the school that accepts the works of Kumārila Bhaṭṭa as authoritative). The edition I have followed is that of A. Subrahmanya Shastri (1982), which is printed together with the commentary of Rāmānujācārya (fl. c.1750), the *Nāyakaratnam*. (Shastri's edition seems to follow the edition of K.S. Ramaswami Sastri [1937], which was published as volume 75 in Gaekwad's Oriental Series.) Accordingly, page numbers given in square brackets correspond to the pagination of Shastri 1982, and references in the footnotes are to this edition, by page and line number. (I have not translated the Sanskrit topic-headings introduced into the text by Shastri, though I have counted these in numbering the lines.) For the most part, the only changes I have made to this edition involve minor alterations of punctuation, which I have not bothered to note. Interestingly, the significance of this chapter is reflected in the fact that the entire chapter is given, under the heading *prāmāṇyavādārtha* ("the point of the discourse on validity"), in the *Mīmāṃsākoṣaḥ* (Sarasvati, ed. 1960: vol. 5, pp.2860-2864). In the notes to my translation, I have given the Sanskrit of Pārthasārathi's text, as well as various comments on the form and flow of Pārthasārathi's argument.

Translation

[p.43] "The argument (*nyāya*) is set forth in such a way that the validity of awareness is ascertained intrinsically, and [its] *in*-validity [is ascertained] dependently." [*Kārikā* 1]

[The doctrine of] intrinsic validity and dependent validity was composed (*nibaddham*) by the master [i.e., Kumārila], who begins [his discussion of the subject at *Ślokavārttika* II.47, which reads] "[the validity] of all *pramāṇas* ... is intrinsic ...." With respect to this [verse from the *Ślokavārtika*, correct interpretation of which will be the guiding concern here], commentators diverge: Is the word *sva-* reflexive to [awareness

it-]*self* (*ātma-vacana*),[1] or does it refer to [something] *belonging to* (*ātmiya*) the [awareness]? Moreover, does validity intrinsically *exist* (*bhavati*), or [does it intrinsically] *appear* (*bhāti*)? Moreover, is what we call validity the state of an object's being as it is, or is it the condition of having *ascertainment* of an object's being as it is?[2]

With respect to this, "This word *sva-* is reflexive to [awareness it-]*self*; validity intrinsically *appears*; and validity is set forth as the *being thus* of an object." [*Kārikā* 2][3]

In this regard, some[4] say first of all: What we call "validity" is [an awareness's][5] being non-deviant (*avyabhicārī*) from an object, which is to say, [the awareness's] being one whose cognitive object (*viṣaya*) is a thing as it really is. And this [i.e., the validity] of awarenesses is *produced* intrinsically (*svata eva jāyate*). This word *sva-* is expressive of [something] *belonging to* [the awareness]. That is as much as to say that an awareness's being one whose cognitive object is a thing as it really is comes into being (*jāyete*) based precisely on its own cause (*svīyād eva kāraṇāt*), and not based on [some

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[1] That we are justified in inserting "awareness" here will be made clear at p.49.6; cf., n.54, below.

[2] p.43.3-8: *Vijñānasya pramāṇatvaṃ svato nirṇiyate yathā / Parataś ca-apramāṇatvaṃ tathā nyāyo 'bhidhiyate //* (1). *"Svataḥ sarvapramāṇānām" ity ārabhya svataḥprāmāṇyaṃ, parataścāprāmāṇyam ācāryair nibaddham. Tatra vyākhyātāro vivadante: Svaśabdaḥ kim ātmavacanaḥ, ātmiyavacano vā? Tathā prāmāṇyaṃ kim svato bhavati, kiṃ vā bhāti; tathā prāmāṇyaṃ nāma kim arthatathātvaṃ, kiṃ vā tathābhūtārthaniścāyakatvam iti?*

Note that Pārthasārathi's own text is nominally written in the form of *kārikās* with auto-commentary. There are, however, only four *kārikās*, with by far the majority of the commentarial discussion given to elaborating the second and third.

[3] p.43.10-11: *Tatra ca, "Ātmavāci svaśabdo 'yaṃ, svato bhāti pramāṇatā / Arthasya ca tathābhāvaḥ prāmāṇyam abhidhiyate //* (2).

Here, Pārthasārathi most succinctly states what he takes to be the authoritative interpretation with respect to the points at issue. With regard to the third of these three issues, the important point is that validity is thought not to require a second-order *ascertainment* in order for it to obtain. Pārthasārathi is, in my mind, rather less clear in dealing with this issue than he is in addressing the others, but it seems to me that we can take him to be making a point that fits well with Chapter 3's reconstruction vis-à-vis Allston: we are entitled to regard first-order cognitive events as truth-conducive, and do not need to await the judgments of second-order ("ascertaining") cognitions in order to take them that way. For more in this vein, cf., *inter alia*, n.11, below.

[4] It seems to be an interpretation such as Uṃveka's that Pārthasārathi here begins to lay out.

[5] Here, Pārthasārathi is ambiguous as to whether "being non-deviant" (*avyabhicāritvam*) is a property specifically *of some awareness*, or whether instead it is an ontological state of affairs that obtains regardless of anyone's awareness thereof. As we saw in Chapter 3, Uṃveka rather startlingly says, at one point, that validity occurs simply given "non-discordance with an object, *even without the fact of producing an awareness*"; cf., Chapter 3, nn.72-3.

additional] efficacy (*guṇa*). But *in*-validity – which has as its definition the state of having as cognitive object a thing *not* as it is – is *not* produced based on the cause that belongs to itself; rather, it is based on some deficiency which is included in it (*tadgatāt*). Hence, it is said [to be produced] dependently.[6] For if [an awareness's] being one whose cognitive object is a real thing (*satyārthaviṣayatā*) were to have [some] efficacy (*guṇa*) as its cause, while [an awareness's] being one whose cognitive object is unreal (*asatyaviṣayatā*) is based on a deficiency in its [i.e., the awareness's] own cause (*svakāraṇa*), then, that being the case, when awarenesses of yellow seashells and so forth are being produced (*pītaśaṅkhādijñāneṣu jāyamāneṣu*) based on senses and so forth which are devoid of efficacy [and] conjoined with a deficiency, [p.44] [then] nothing true at all would be understood; but [in fact], even in these cases, the shape and so forth of the seashells is truly understood.[7]

But when being an [awareness whose] object is unreal is dependent upon deficiencies, [and] when [its] being one whose cognitive object is real is dependent upon its own cause (*svakāraṇa*), [then] by virtue of these two [reasons] together (*ubhābhyāṃ militābhyāṃ*], it makes sense (*upapannam*) that [awareness] is being produced (*jāyamānaṃ*), having as cognitive object both real and unreal things. Therefore, validity – defined by [an awareness's] being like its object – is produced based on [awareness's] very own cause, it is not [merely that it intrinsically] *appears* [as valid]; for awareness does not cause [one] to understand (*avagamayati*) itself, nor its own (*ātmīyam*) validity, because of [awareness's] being exhausted (*upakṣīṇa*) in the mere illumination of an

[6] p.43.11-15: *Tatra kecit tāvad āhuḥ: Prāmāṇyaṃ nāma arthāvyabhicāritvaṃ, tathābhūtārthaviṣayatvam iti yāvat. Tac ca jñānānāṃ svata eva jāyate. Svaśabdo 'yam ātmīyavacanaḥ. Svīyād eva kāraṇāt tathābhūtārthaviṣayatvaṃ jñānasya jāyate, na guṇād iti yāvat. Aprāmāṇyan tv ayathārthaviṣayatvalakṣaṇaṃ na svīyād eva kāraṇāj jāyate; api tarhi tadgatād doṣād iti parataḥ ity ucyate.*

[7] p.43.15-44.1: *Yadi hi satyārthaviṣayatā guṇanimittā syāt, svakāraṇadoṣāt tv asatyaviṣayatā-eva, tathā sati, doṣayuktād guṇahīnād indriyādeḥ pītaśaṅkhādijñāneṣu jāyamāneṣu* [p.44] *na kiṃcit satyaṃ gamyeta; gamyate tu tatrāpi śaṅkhasvarūpādikaṃ satyam.*

Note that this iṣ almost exactly the same reasoning that Pārthasārathi himself uses at one point in his own commentary to *Ślokavārttika* II.47; cf., Chapter 3, n.97. It is striking, then, that he here attributes the deployment of this example to the proponent of an alternative interpretation that he will be rejecting.

object.[8] But *in*-validity, defined by [an awareness's] not being like its object, is based on a deficiency in the instrument, i.e., is dependent; hence, because of the absence of any deficiency [on the part of the Veda], there is validity (*yathārthatvam*, "being like its object") on the part of the Veda.[9]

But given this position, [Kumārila's] refutation (*dūṣaṇaṃ*) of dependent validity – [which refutation is effected] by the unwanted consequence of infinite regress, as indicated by passages such as [*Ślokavārttika* II.49, which says,] "even when awareness is produced, if [an object is still not ascertained until purity of the instrument is known...]" – does not make sense (*na ghaṭate*).[10] For if validity is dependent upon *awareness* of an efficacy (*guṇajñānādhine hi prāmāṇye*) there would be regress. But when there is dependence on the efficacy *itself* (*guṇasvarūpa*) [i.e., and not on our *awareness* of such],[11] then even uncomprehended (*anavagata*) efficacies produce (*janayanti*) the validity of awarenesses, just as the senses do; hence, there is no consequence of infinite regress.[12]

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[8] Here, Pārthasārathi is (by having the proponent of an alternative interpretation peg that interpretation to the avoidance of this consequence) anticipating the objection that his interpretation of *svataḥ prāmāṇya* will compromise the characteristically Mīmāṃsaka disavowal of the *svaprakāśatva* of awareness (its "being self-illuminating"); cf., Chapter 3, n.102. See also n.34, below.

[9] p.44.1-6: *Doṣādhine tv asatyārthatve, svakāraṇādhine satyaviṣayatve saty, ubhābhyāṃ milithābhyāṃ jāyamānaṃ satyāsatyārthaviṣayakaṃ bhavati-ity upapannam. Tasmāt sviyāt kāraṇād yathārthatvalakṣaṇaṃ prāmāṇyaṃ jāyate, na tu bhāti; na hi jñānam ātmānam, ātmiyaṃ vā prāmāṇyam avagamayati, arthaprakāśamātropakṣiṇatvāt. Paratas tu kāraṇadoṣād ayathārthatvalakṣaṇam aprāmāṇyam iti, doṣābhāvād vedasya yathārthatvam iti.*

[10] Here, in beginning his critical assessment of the interpretation he has just canvassed, Pārthasārathi thus indicates something of the extent to which his counter-argument will be exegetical – the extent, that is, to which it will involve his claiming that alternatives to the interpretation he will finally propose cannot make sense of Kumārila's text, the authoritativeness of which is, on Pārthasārathi's view, to be upheld.

[11] This contrast between dependence on *awareness* of efficacies and dependence on efficacies *themselves* is crucial. This allows Pārthasārathi to retain the view that, as most people will hold, things like properly functioning sense faculties do indeed cause awareness; it's just that we need not be *aware* of this in order for the cognitions thus caused to be valid. What Pārthasārathi is refusing, then, is that the validity of awareness depends upon our being *aware* of how it was caused; he is not refusing that the awareness itself came about in dependence upon various factors. This distinction is among the aspects of this project with particularly striking affinities to Alston; cf., especially, Chapter 3, p111.

[12] p.44.8-11: *Asmiṃs tu pakṣe "jāte 'pi yadi vijñāne" (Ślokavārtika 1.49) ityādinā 'navasthāprasaṅgena parataḥprāmāṇyadūṣaṇaṃ na ghaṭate. Guṇajñānādhine hi prāmāṇye syād anavasthā. Guṇasvarūpāyatte tv anavagatā eva guṇā indriyavaj jñānaprāmāṇyaṃ janayantiti, na-anavasthāpattiḥ.*

The point of this last claim is that we do not need to "apperceive" our senses functioning in order to

Similarly, [in *Ślokavārttika* II.66c-d, Kumārila] anticipates the objection (*codayitvā*) that "if absence of deficiencies is due to efficacies, there would infinite regress"; he answers it (*pariharan*) thus [at *Ślokavārttika* II.67a-b]: "[we answer: not so,] for then the efficacies are not functioning (*vyāpriyante*) as being *known* (*jñāyamānatayā*)."[13] [In this way, Kumārila] shows that, on the position which advocates dependent validity,[14] validity is dependent precisely on *awareness* of efficacies, not on the efficacies themselves.[15]

In the same vein, [Kumārila says, at *Ślokavārttika* II.53]: "Therefore, the validity (*pramāṇatā*) of a cognition that is gained [simply] by virtue of its *being* a cognition is overridden (*apodyate*) based on awareness of a deficiency originating from (*uttha*) the cause [of the awareness], or [based on awareness of] the object's not being that way"[16] – [p.45] saying this, [Kumārila makes clear that] on the established position (*siddhānte*), it is precisely *in*-validity which is based on *awareness* of a deficiency; [Kumārila] clearly

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gain knowledge from them; their proper functioning does not consist in their being themselves an object of perception or knowledge, but simply in their "illuminating an object." Here, then, Pārthasārathi effectively returns the argument he has attributed to Umveka. In this connection, he might usefully have cited Kumārila's *Bṛhaṭṭīkā*, as preserved at *Tattvasaṃgraha* 2911-12: *yathā ca-aviditair eva cakṣurādibhir indriyaiḥ / gṛhyante viṣayāḥ sarve pramāṇair api te tathā // tena-atra jñāyamānatvaṃ prāmāṇye na-upayujyate / viṣayānubhavo 'py asmād ajñātād eva labhyate //* ("and just as objects are grasped by senses, such as the eyes, that are themselves uncognized, so too is everything [grasped] by reliable warrants. Thus, in this case, the fact of being known does not make sense with respect to validity; experience of an object is had based on it being unknown").

[13] Again, Pārthasārathi here fairly compellingly advances his case for the exegetical adequacy of his position, adducing texts from Kumārila that are indeed very much to the point. Here again, the point is that the proper functioning of the senses does not consist in their being known *themselves*, but simply in disclosing their respective objects.

[14] Pārthasārathi's text simply reads *parapakṣe*; but Rāmānujācārya's *Nāyakaratnam* here (p.45, line 2 of the commentary) glosses this as *parataḥ prāmāṇyapakṣe*.

[15] p.44.12-15: *Tathā "doṣābhāvo guṇebhyaś cen nanu saivāsthitir bhavet" iti codayitvā, "Tadā na vyāpriyante hi jñāyamānatayā guṇāḥ" iti pariharan parapakṣe guṇajñānād eva prāmāṇyam, na guṇasvarūpād iti darśayati.* Cf., the *Bṛhaṭṭīkā* at *Tattvasaṃgraha* 2892c-3b: *jñāyamānatayā naiva guṇās tatra-upakāriṇaḥ // sattāmātreṇa te sarve doṣavyāvārttanakṣamāḥ* ("It is not by virtue of their being *known* that efficacies are helping in regard to this, but simply by *being*; these are all exhausted in their turning back deficiencies").

[16] This is Pārthasārathi's first citation of *Ślokavārttika* II.53, a text he will press against alternative interpretations at several points.

says that it is not based on the deficiency itself. Thus, given this position,[17] many verses – such as [*Ślokavārttika* II.34, which says,] "others (say that validity and invalidity) are based on ascertainment of efficacies sprung from the cause" – do not harmonize [with one another]; hence, this position is not commended (*abhimata*) by the author of the (*Śloka*)-*vartika*.[18]

But others[19] say: Validity is [an awareness's] being the effector of *ascertainment* of a [previously] uncomprehended object's being-thus. And that [validity] is produced (*jāyate*) intrinsically on the part of awarenesses. And the word "*sva-*" is reflexive to [the awareness it-]*self*.[20] Ascertainment of an object's being-thus is *produced* based precisely on the essence of *awareness* (*jñānasvarūpād eva*). It is not based on awareness of efficacy, nor on awareness of correspondence, nor on awareness of practical efficacy, due to the consequence of infinite regress. But ascertainment of an object's *not* being thus is dependent, based on awareness of deficiency, or based on awareness of the non-thus-ness of the object; hence, it is said to be dependent.[21]

Given this position,[22] too, validity is *produced* intrinsically, rather than being *known* [intrinsically]; hence, in this case, this should be said [against the foregoing

[17] That is, given the first alternative interpretation canvassed by Pārthasārathi (i.e., the one I characterized as resembling Uṃveka's).

[18] p.44.16-45.3: *Tathā, "Tasmād bodhātmakatvena prāptā buddheḥ pramāṇatā / arthānyathātva-hetūtthadoṣajñānād apodyate //" iti* [p.45] *vadan siddhānte doṣajñānād eva-aprāmāṇyam, na doṣasvarūpād iti vyaktam evāha. Tathā, "apare kāraṇotpannaguṇadoṣāvadhāraṇāt"* (ŚV 1.34) *ityādayo bahavaḥ ślokā asmin pakṣe na saṅgacchante. Ato na vārtikakārābhimato 'yam pakṣaḥ.*

[19] Here, Pārthasārathi introduces another interpretation of Kumārila's account of *svataḥ prāmāṇya*. This interpretation, with its emphasis on *niścaya*, seems in significant ways similar to that of Sucaritamiśra; cf., Chapter 3, n.105. As noted there, though, the widely accepted relative chronology has Sucaritamiśra writing after Pārthasārathi – though I also noted some reason to question this.

[20] Clearly, this position is closer to Pārthasārathi's than was the first he considered. His objection to this interpretation will center particularly on the fact that it still takes the *production* of validity (and not its *appearing*) as what is intrinsic.

[21] p.45.4-7: *Anye tv āhuḥ: anadhigatatathābhūtārthaniścāyakatvaṃ prāmāṇyam. Tac ca jñānānāṃ svata eva jāyate. Svaśabdaś ca-ayam ātmavacanaḥ. Jñānasvarūpād eva tathābhūtārthaniścayo jāyate. Na guṇajñānāt, saṃvādajñānāt, arthakriyājñānād vā, anavasthāprasaṅgāt. Arthānyathātvaniścayas tu parato, doṣajñānāt arthānyathātvajñānād vā-iti parata ity ucyata iti.*

[22] Pārthasārathi here begins his response to the interpretation just canvassed.

position]: If awareness itself is the cause with respect to the *production* (*janman*) of validity, then, this being the case, you're forced to say (*vaktavyam*) that with respect to the production of *in*-validity, too, causal efficacy belongs to awareness of deficiencies and overriding awarenesses. In this case, the invalidity *of what* is produced (*jāyate*) based on awareness of the deficiency of cause, or based on awareness of overriding (awareness)? For the invalidity of an awareness of silver, with respect to [what is really] mother-of-pearl (*śukti*), is not to be produced (*janyam*) by overriders and so forth, because of its [i.e., the initial awareness's] not having been a *pramāṇa*[23] at the outset. For *ascertainment* of an object's not being thus is invalidity; and since this [i.e., awareness of silver with respect to what is really mother-of-pearl] is based on awareness which was not a *pramāṇa*, it *exists* intrinsically; awareness which is contrary to it and so forth is not required [in order for its not to have been a *pramāṇa*]. For it is not the case that what was a really existing *pramāṇa* at the outset is subsequently rendered a *non-pramāṇa* by an overrider; rather, the invalidity that was present from the outset is *made known* by an overrider.[24]

[Objection:] But ascertainment of an object's not being thus is brought about (*janyate*) precisely by an overrider.

[Response:] That's true; but that's not invalidity! For ascertainment of an object's not being thus is not the invalidity of a previous awareness; rather, it is the real (*vastutas*) otherwise-ness of the object [which makes for the invalidity of an awareness].

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[23] Throughout this section, "*pramāṇa*" clearly has the sense of "veridical awareness," but I will leave it untranslated and let the text speak for itself about how the word is being used; cf., Chapter 3, nn.6-7.

[24] p.45.8-14: *Asminn api pakṣe svataḥ prāmāṇyaṃ jāyate, na tu jñāyata, ity atra-idaṃ vaktavyam. Yadi prāmāṇyasya janmani svayam eva kāraṇaṃ jñānaṃ, tathā saty aprāmāṇyasya-api janmany eva doṣajñāna-bādhakajñānayoḥ kāraṇatvaṃ vaktavyam. Tatra kasya-aprāmāṇyaṃ kāraṇadoṣajñānāt, bādhakajñānād vā jāyate; na hi śuktau rajatajñānasya bādhakādijanyam aprāmāṇyam; utpattāv eva tasya-apramāṇatvāt. Atathābhūtārthaniścayo hy aprāmāṇyaṃ. Tac ca-apramāṇajñānāt svata eva bhavatiti, na tadbādhakajñānādikam apekṣate. Na hy utpattau pramāṇaṃ sat paścād bādhakena apramāṇīkriyate. Api tu-utpattāv eva bhūtam aprāmāṇyaṃ bādhakena khyāpyate.*

Or, with respect to [an object][25] which is other [than the awareness thereof, invalidity consists in] being certain that it is [nonetheless] thus. But neither of these [senses of invalidity] is to be produced by overriders, since the object is *intrinsically* otherwise [than the awareness that represents it]; [p.46] and because, with respect to an object which is otherwise [than the awareness that represents it], there is ascertainment of its thus-ness based on awareness which is not a *pramāṇa* (*apramāṇajñānāt*), i.e., intrinsically.[26] And thus,[27] invalidity, too, would, [counterfactually,] be produced intrinsically.[28]

"Therefore, the validity of a cognition that is gained precisely by virtue of its *being* a cognition is overridden based on awareness of a deficiency which has arisen from a cause, or [based on awareness of] an object's not being thus"[29] – [on the view of invalidity presently being canvassed,] even such verses would have to be explained by you [in the following way]: the validity of a conception is produced intrinsically, [and] subsequently overridden. And this doesn't make sense, because of [the awareness's having been] a non-*pramāṇa* from the outset.[30]

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[25] Pārthasārathi's text simply reads *anyathābhūte vā*, but Rāmānujācārya's commentary (p.45, line 16 of the commentary) glosses this as *anyathābhūte 'rthe*.

[26] That is, the ontological state of affairs in question was already as it is, and what's overridden is simply the assumption that the initial awareness thereof was a *pramāṇa*. It is Pārthasārathi's insistence on these points that allows for the possibility of his account's involving a robust conception of truth, despite its being an account according to which *svataḥ prāmāṇya* simply concerns (as I have put it) prima facie justification. It is also why Pārthasārathi can think that Uṃveka is misguided in elaborately working out a theory of error.

[27] I.e., if, as the preceding objection has it, invalidity were *produced* by an overriding awareness, rather than simply *made known*.

[28] p.45.14-46.2: *Nanu* [Shastri's edition reads "*na tu*," but *nanu* is recommended by the quickly ensuing concessive, "*satyam*"; the correct reading is, moreover, given in Rāmānujācārya's commentary, p.45, line 16] *arthasya-anyathābhāvaniścayo bādhakenaiva janyate. Satyam; na tu tad eva-aprāmāṇyam; na hy arthānyathābhāvaniścayaḥ pūrvajñānasya-aprāmāṇyam; kintu vastuto 'rthasya-anyathābhāvaḥ anyathābhūte vā tathābhāvaniścāyakatvam. Na-etad ubhayam api bādhakajanyam; svataḥ evārthasya-anyathā-* [p.46] *bhāvāt, svata eva ca-apramāṇajñānād anyathābhūte 'rthe tathātvaniścayāt. Tathā ca-aprāmāṇyam api svata evotpadyeta.*

[29] Pārthasārathi here again quotes *Ślokavārttika* II.53, which is clearly a key text for him.

[30] p.46.3-6: *"Tasmād bodhātmakatvena prāptā buddheḥ pramāṇatā, arthānyathātvahetūtthadoṣajñānād apodyate"– iti śloko 'pi bhavatā ittham vhākhyeyaḥ: buddheḥ svato jātaṃ prāmāṇyaṃ paścād apodyata iti. Tac ca-ayuktam, utpattāv eva-apramāṇatvāt.*

That is, on the view that invalidity intrinsically *comes into being* (rather than simply being *known* intrinsically), one would have to hold that falsification occurs when an awareness that had initially been valid is actually *transformed* by any overriding awareness. Against this, Pārthasārathi is arguing (as

Or [it could be thought] that validity is merely ascertainment, [and] invalidity the absence of that; and that [i.e., absence of ascertainment] is effected by an overrider. This doesn't make sense; for the destruction (*vināśa*) of ascertainment is not effected by an overrider, since its [i.e., certainty's] perishability (*vinaśvaratva*) is precisely intrinsic.[31]

Therefore, it is to be explained in this way[32]: "A cognition's own (*svīyam*) validity is understood intrinsically, and invalidity [is understood] dependently, based on a deficiency or an overriding conception." [*Kārikā* 3][33]

[Objection:] But in this case [i.e., given Pārthasārathi's interpretation], too, there would be [both] contradiction with [Kumārila's] text and contradiction of reasoning (*nyāya*); for awareness (*vijñānam*) does not grasp itself, much less (*natarām*) its own (*ātmīyam*) validity or invalidity, because of its being exhausted by the mere attainment of an object.[34] Thus: [Kumārila] anticipates the objection (*codayitvā*) [that his doctrine entails] the fault of not grasping validity, [i.e., at *Ślokavārttika* II.82, which says,] "But

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required on a realist account of truth!) that invalid awarenesses were mistaken from the outset, and that all that is in question is the second-order question of whether or not we *know* it was mistaken.

[31] p.46.6-8: *Atha niścāyakatvamātraṃ prāmāṇyam, tadabhāvo 'prāmāṇyam; tac ca bādhakena kriyata iti matam. Tad ayuktam; na hi bādhakena niścayasya vināśaḥ kriyate, tasya svata eva vinaśvaratvāt.*

The point here seems to be that Pārthasārathi's account requires that the "perishability" – perhaps we could say *instability* – of "certainty" must represent an integral possibility. This is because his view is that *both* (of what turn out to be) true and false awarenesses initially present themselves (*bhāti*, they "appear") as valid (we are, that is, prima facie justified in crediting them) – in which case, it must be that *any awareness at all* could come to appear otherwise; i.e., it must be that the "certainty" yielded (i.e., the prima facie justification initially conferred) could "perish," and give way to the second-order recognition that the initial awareness had been false.

[32] Pārthasārathi thus introduces the third *kārikā* of the chapter, which again states what he takes to be the correct interpretation of Kumārila's account of *svataḥ prāmāṇya*.

[33] p.46.9-10: *Tasmād evaṃ vaktavyam: Buddheḥ svīyaṃ pramāṇatvaṃ svata eva-avagamyate / parataś ca-apramāṇatvaṃ doṣa-bādhakabodhataḥ* // (3). Note that Rāmānujācārya glosses *avagamyate* ("is understood") with *pratibhāti* ("appears," "seems"); cf., p.46, lines 8-9 of the commentary. In either case, as the foregoing discussion makes clear, the contrast is obviously with *jāyate*, "is produced," "comes into being," etc.

[34] Here again, Pārthasārathi anticipates the objection that his interpretation compromises the characteristically Bhāṭṭa Mīmāṃsaka refusal of *svaprakāśatva*; cf., n.8, above. With respect to this passage, Rāmānujācārya makes clear that this is indeed the doctrine at issue, and explains that contradiction with this doctrine is what represents a potential "contradiction of reasoning" (*nyāyavirodha*): *Prathamaṃ nyāyavirodham āha, "na hi" iti, "gṛhṇāti" iti; asvayaṃprakāśatvād iti śeṣaḥ. Tathā ca prāmāṇyaṃ svato bhātīty anupapannam ity arthaḥ* (p.46, lines 9-11 of the commentary).

[on your view,] things like perception are thus not grasped as reliable warrants (*pramāṇa*), and getting on in the world (*vyavahāra*) is not possible by way of such ungrasped [perceptions and so forth – i.e., when criteria are not comprehended as authoritative]." [Kumārila] grants (*aṅgikṛtya*) the non-apprehension of *pramāṇas*, and avoids the unwanted consequence of a fault (*doṣaprasaṅgaṃ samādhatte*) [by rejoining, at *Ślokavārttika* II.83,] "A reliable warrant is already established (*saṃshthitam*), prior to its being grasped, simply (*eva*) by its own nature; this is grasped independently by subsequent conceptions (*pratyaya*) which bear on their proper effects."[35] This [text] is contradicted if, [as this objector thinks is the case on Pārthasārathi's interpretation,] there is grasping of validity by [awareness] itself.[36]

[p.47] In the same way, [Kumārila anticipated the characteristically Buddhist claim that] validity, insofar as it's a real thing consisting in ascertainment, is produced by efficacies: "Their [viz., awarenesses'] validity, by virtue of its being a thing, is produced

[35] This text from Kumārila amounts to a succinct statement of the characteristically Bhāṭṭa contention that the fact of having known something is inferred from the fact of something's *being known* (*jñātatā*) – i.e., and not by an act of reflexive awareness (as characteristically proposed by the Buddhist Epistemologists). Particularly in *padas* c-d of this verse (*nirapakeṣaṃ svakāryeṣu gṛhyante pratyayāntaraiḥ*), the point is put rather elliptically; but cf., Sucaritamiśra's *Kāśikā* on this verse (p.104), where it is, *inter alia*, made clear that this doctrine also amounts to an alternative to the causal account of knowledge put forth by the Buddhist Epistemologists (for which, cf., Chapter 2, n.91): *yathā aviditasvarūpaśaktiny api cakṣurādindriyāṇi parānapekṣāṇy eva kṛtakāryāṇi kāryānyathānupapattyā paścād avasiyante, na ca-eteṣāṃ jñānaṃ kāryaṃ pratyupayujyate, tasya nirapekṣair eva-indriyaiḥ kṛtatvāt; evaṃ pramāṇam api pratyakṣādi pratyayāntaragrahaṇāt pūrvaṃ svakārye viṣayaparicchede nirapekṣam eva saṃsthitam...* ("Senses such as the eyes, even though their nature and capacities be unknown, accomplish their effects independently – [a fact that is] subsequently ascertained by a [necessary presumption] from the *sine qua non* which is the effect; and it does not make sense that the awareness is an effect of these, because of its having been produced by senses that are independent [of awareness]. Just as in this case, so, too, *pramāṇas* such as perception are established, prior to their having been grasped by another conception, independent of their proper effect, which is delimitation of a cognitive object...). "*Sine qua non*" (*anyathānupapatti*) is whatever must be posited by an act of *arthāpatti* ("necessary presumption"), which is admitted as a *pramāṇa* by Mīmāṃsakas. Thus, Kumārila wants to say that there is no explaining the "effect" (*kārya*) of something's having been "known" (*jñāta*), except by positing an act of knowing as "that without which" this could not have occurred; and he wishes to do so in large part to avoid holding (with the Buddhist Epistemologists) that awareness itself is simply among the "effects" produced by the object thereof.

[36] p.46.11-19: *Nanv atra-api granthavirodhaḥ, nyāyavirodhaś ca syāt; tathā hi -- na hi vijñānam ātmānaṃ gṛhṇāti; na tarām ātmiyaṃ prāmāṇyam, aprāmāṇyaṃ vā, arthagrahaṇamātropakṣiṇatvāt. Tathā – "Nanu pramāṇam ity evaṃ pratyakṣādi na gṛhyate / na ca-ittham agṛhitena vyavahāro 'vakalpate //" iti prāmāṇyāgrahaṇadoṣaṃ codayitvā – "Pramāṇaṃ grahaṇāt pūrvaṃ svarūpeṇaiva saṃsthitam / nirapekṣaṃ svakāryeṣu gṛhyate pratyayāntaraiḥ //" iti pramāṇatvāgrahaṇam aṅgikṛtya-eva doṣaprasaṅgaṃ samādhatte. Tad viruddhyate prāmāṇyasya-ātmanā grahaṇe.*

by efficacies" [*Ślokavārttika* II.39]. But the production of validity, which consists in ascertainment, is easily gained (*svadhyavasānam*), by virtue of its being the effect of awareness of efficacies in the cause, or of correspondence, by virtue of its being a thing – saying, with respect to the [Buddhist] position which holds this, that causal efficacy belongs to the efficacies precisely regarding the *origin* of validity, [Kumārila] shows that on the established conclusion (*siddhānte*), it's the *production* that's intrinsic. Therefore, the position which holds that [validity] *appears* intrinsically doesn't make sense.[37]

In regard to this,[38] it is explained: First of all, as for what you said: "Awareness doesn't apprehend itself, because of its consisting in the illumination of a cognitive object; and when it is not itself being grasped, validity can't be grasped as being connected to that (*saṃbandhitayā*)" – if we were saying that awareness apprehends in such a way [as to announce its epistemic credentials, as though saying] 'I am a *pramāṇa*,' or 'validity (*prāmāṇya*) belongs to me,' then we could be censured as you say. But this is not what we said. What, then? That which is *actually* (*vastutas*) the validity of awareness, that in virtue of which an awareness becomes a *pramāṇa* – *that*, which is what is expressed when the word '*prāmāṇya*' is perceived, by virtue of its being the motivator

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[37] p.47.1-5: *Tathā niścayātmakavastutvāt prāmāṇyaṃ janyate guṇaiḥ, "vastutvāt guṇais teṣāṃ prāmāṇyam upajanyate"; Niścayātmakaprāmāṇyotpādanam tu vastusvarūpatvāt saṃvādakāraṇaguṇajñānakāryatvena svadhyavasānam iti pūrvapakṣe prāmāṇyasya janmany eva guṇānāṃ kāraṇatvam iti vadan, siddhānte 'pi janmaiva svata iti darśayati. Tasmāt svato bhāt-ity ayam api pakṣo 'nupapannaḥ iti.*

Note that while Pārthasārathi's interlocutor here adduces one of the passages from the *Ślokavārttika* that represents a Buddhist *pūrvapakṣin* (i.e., *Ślokavārttika* II.39), his focus continues to be on alternative *Mīmāṃsaka* interpretations of Kumārila; thus, the objection Pārthasārathi here anticipates is that, on his interpretation, there is no good way to make sense of Kumārila's having framed the Buddhist point in just the way that he does. The point at issue remains essentially the same as the point noted by S. K. Saksena (1940; cf., Chapter 3, n.102) – that is, the question of whether Pārthasārathi's interpretation of *svataḥ prāmāṇya* compromises the Bhāṭṭa commitment to refusing that awareness is "self-illuminating" (*svaprakāśa*). Note, too, that the underlined passage is found, verbatim, in Sucaritamiśra's *Kāśikā* (p.87.3-5), where Sucarita, too, is commenting on *Ślokavārttika* II.39. Sucarita introduces the passage as a quotation, and when Pārthasārathi returns to this (p.51; nn.70, 71, below), he refers to the passage as a *grantha*, which similarly suggests a direct quotation. Unfortunately, I have been unable to determine the source of this quotation, which is not to be found, for example, in the *Tattvasaṃgraha* or in Dharmakīrti's *Pramāṇavārttika*.

[38] That is, the question of whether Pārthasārathi's interpretation of *svataḥ prāmāṇya* compromises the Bhāṭṭa commitment to refusing that awareness is "self-illuminating" (*svaprakāśa*).

(*bhāvakatayā*) of the concept and the word '*pramāṇa*,' is said to be grasped by awareness itself.[39]

And what is that?[40] The quiddity of an object (*arthatathātvam*); for precisely *that* is the validity of an awareness, i.e. (*yad*) the being-thus of an object, because of the validity of an awareness whose object exists in that way. And precisely this is *in*-validity, i.e. (*yad*) the being-otherwise of an object. Therefore, validity, in the form of the thusness of an object, belonging to [the awareness it-]self, is ascertained *based on the awareness itself* (*svata eva jñānād*).[41] It is not to be understood based on awareness of efficacies, or of correspondence, or of pragmatic efficacy. But *in*-validity, *belonging to* (*ātmiyam*)[42] [awareness], in the form of being otherwise than an object, is not understood intrinsically; rather, it's based on awareness of a defect in the cause, or based directly on awareness such as 'this [thing I'd previously perceived turns out to be] not so.' This is how, in regard to this, it is settled.[43]

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[39] p.47.6-11: *atra-abhidhiyate: yat tāvad uktaṃ "na jñānam ātmānaṃ gṛhṇāti, viṣayaprakāśātmakatvāt; na ca-ātmany agṛhyamāṇe tatsaṃbandhitayā prāmāṇyaṃ śakyate gṛhitum" iti: yadi vayaṃ jñānam 'ahaṃ pramāṇam' ity evaṃ, 'madiyaṃ vā prāmāṇyam' ity evaṃ gṛhṇāti-iti vadem, tadā-evam upālabhyemahi. Na tv evam asmābhir ucyate. kiṃ tarhi? Yad vastuto jñānasya prāmāṇyaṃ, yadvaśāj jñānaṃ pramāṇaṃ bhavati, tat pramāṇabuddhiśabdayor* <u>*bhāvakatayā labdhaprāmāṇyapadābhidhāniyakam*</u> *ātmanā-eva jñānena gṛhyata ity ucyate.* Rāmānujācārya (p.48, lines 2-3 of commentary) provides the following gloss on the underlined passage: *bhāvakatayā: nirūpakatayā, nimittatayā-iti yāvat. Labdhaprāmāṇyapadābhidhāniyakaṃ: "prāmāṇyam" iti padena labdham abhidheyakam ity arthaḥ.* ("'By virtue of being the motivator' means by virtue of being the determiner, which is to say, by virtue of being the cause. 'To be expressed when the word *prāmāṇya* is perceived' means [that what is] apprehended by the word '*prāmāṇya*' is the subject.") See also, n.65, below.

[40] I.e., what is it that is "actually (*vastutas*) the validity of awareness".

[41] Here, "*svatas*" goes closely with *jñānād*, and should thus be taken as reflexive to it, and not (as so often in the context of discussing *svataḥ prāmāṇya*) rendered as "intrinsically." This phrase (*svata eva jñānāt*) perhaps represents the clearest gloss on Pārthasārathi's understanding of the *svataḥ* in *Ślokavārttika* II.47.

[42] Thus, Pārthasārathi suggests that, if anything, the gloss of *svataḥ* as "*ātmiyam*" ("belonging to") is more appropriate to the case of *in*-validity; that is, invalidity does not *reflexively* characterize awareness, it is, rather, a possible property of it that can later be discovered.

[43] p.47.11-16: *kiṃ punas tat? arthatathātvam. idam eva hi jñānasya prāmāṇyaṃ yad arthasya tathābhūtatvam. tathābhūtārthasya jñānasya prāmāṇyāt. idam eva ca-aprāmāṇyaṃ yadarthasya-anyathātvam. Tena svata eva jñānād arthatathātvarūpam ātmiyaṃ prāmāṇyaṃ niściyate. Na tu guṇajñānāt, saṃvādajñānāt, arthakriyājñānād vā tadavagantavyam. Aprāmāṇyaṃ tv ātmiyam arthānyathātvarūpaṃ svato na-avagamyate. Tat tu kāraṇadoṣajñānāt, sākṣād eva vā "na etad evam" iti jñānād avagamyata ity etad atra pratipādyate.*

Thus, [Kumārila] says [in the *Bṛhaṭṭikā*]: "For one did not know (*ajñāyi*), by that [initial awareness], 'that previous awareness was false'; for as in the case of a *pramāṇa*, by that [initial awareness] it was ascertained [simply that] 'the object is thus!' How could its [i.e., the object's] being otherwise be established without a subsequent awareness?"[44] [p.48] Similarly, [Kumārila said:] "A non-*pramāṇa* [operates] intrinsically with respect to its proper object, just like a *pramāṇa*; its falseness can't be grasped without a subsequent *pramāṇa*. For an object's not being thus is not apprehended (*ātta*) by the prior, as was its being thus; for given thusness, because it's already grasped, the resulting cognition (*pramā*) would be pointless. But given *non*-thusness, because it's not proven, there is an opportunity for another cognition (*sāvakāśaṃ pramāntaram*; lit., "another cognition is one which has an opportunity [*avakāśa*]")."[45] Thus, in beginning [his] inquiry, [Kumārila asks:] "Are the validity and invalidity of awareness intrinsic? Or is one not clearly ascertained by its nature? Clearly, one position is admitted based on dependence on the other."[46] Saying this, it is here considered whether the *ascertainment* (*nirūpaṇam eva*) of validity and invalidity are intrinsic or dependent; hence, he spoke clearly.[47]

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[44] 47.17-19: *āha ca "mithyaitat pūrvavijñānam iti na-ajñāyi tena hi / pramāṇavad dhi tena-arthas tathaiva-ity avadhāritaḥ // anyathātvaṃ kutas tasya siddhyej jñānāntarād ṛte //."*

Here begins a section in which Pārthasārathi adduces several passages from Kumārila (mostly from the *Bṛhaṭṭikā*) meant to show that his interpretation is warranted by Kumārila's works. And in fact, Pārthasārathi seems to me to have chosen passages that fairly convincingly make this point.

[45] p.48.1-5: *tathā "apramāṇaṃ punaḥ svārthe pramāṇam iva hi svataḥ / mithyātvaṃ tasya gṛhyeta na pramāṇāntarād ṛte // na hy arthasya-atathābhāvaḥ pūrveṇa-āttas tathātvavat / tathātve hy upalabdhatvān niṣphalā syāt punaḥ pramā // anyathātve tv asiddhatvāt sāvakāśaṃ pramāntaram /."* Shastri's annotations suggest that Pārthasārathi here adduces *Ślokavārttika* II.85-6 – which, to be sure, express a similar sentiment, but are really pretty different: *apramāṇaṃ punaḥ svārthagrāhakaṃ syāt svarūpataḥ / nivṛttis tasya mithātve na-agṛhite parair bhavet // na hy arthasya-atathābhāvaḥ pūrveṇa-āttas tathātvavat / tatra-apy arthānyathābhāve dhir yad vā duṣṭakāraṇe //.* In fact, the first three *padas* are to be found at *Tattvasaṃgraha* 2913-2914b, suggesting that they are from the *Bṛhaṭṭikā*. I have not been able to locate the remainder.

[46] p.48.6-8: *tathā vicāropakrame: "pramāṇatvāpramāṇatve jñānasya svata eva kim/ athavā-ekam api spaṣṭaṃ svabhāvena-anirūpitam // parāśrayād asandigdham ekaṃ pakṣaṃ prapadyate /."* Again, this is presumably from the *Bṛhaṭṭikā*, though it clearly represents that text's analogue to *Ślokavārttika* II.33c-d, ff.: "*pramāṇatvāpramāṇatve svataḥ kiṃ parato 'thavā //...*"

[47] p.48.8-10.... *iti vadan pramāṇatvāpramāṇatvanirūpaṇam eva-iha svataḥ parato vā-iti cintyata iti spaṣṭam āha.*

But what the [*Śloka-*]*vārttika* says – i.e., "But perception and so forth are not grasped as '*pramāṇas*,'" and "a *pramāṇa* is established by its own nature, prior to its apprehension"[48] – these [passages are] say[ing] that since apprehension is not phenomenologically [such that their content is] "I am a *pramāṇa*,"[49] it is therefore the case (*tathā*) that perception and so forth are not grasped as [announcing themselves by saying] "I am a *pramāṇa*!"[50]

[p.49] [Objection:] But if validity is understood at the time of the arising of awareness, [then] that which does not appear (*cakās*) as being a *pramāṇa* at the beginning is a non-*pramāṇa*; hence, at the very beginning, it can be ascertained by elimination (*pariśeṣāt*),[51] even without overriding cognitions or cognitions of defects in the cause; hence, there would be the unwanted consequence that *in*-validity, too, is intrinsic.[52]

[Response:] Don't speak thus! For this word "*sva-*" is not used with *validity* as its referent, [such that] validity [would, tautologically,] appear simply because of validity.

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[48] That is, the passages that Pārthasārathi has anticipated being urged against him by a Mīmāṃsaka interlocutor. In adjudicating between Pārthasārathi's reading of these passages and that of his interlocutor, it is important to be aware that the first passage ("But perception and so forth are not grasped as '*pramāṇas*'") raises an objection – which Kamalaśīla's *Tattvasaṃgrahapañjikā*, in introducing the analogous passage quoted from the *Bṛhaṭṭīkā* (Shastri 1968: 767, preceding *Tattvasaṃgraha* 2909), identifies as that of a Buddhist (*nanv ityādinā bauddho hetvasiddham eva samarthayate*). The second passage ("a *pramāṇa* is established by its own nature...") then provides Kumārila's answer. Again, these verses occur at *Ślokavārttika* II.82-3.

[49] Literally, "since there is no apprehension by way of a phenomenal aspect (*ākāra*) 'I am a *pramāṇa*'" (*asmi-ity anena-ākāreṇa-agrahaṇāt*).

[50] p.48.11-14: *yat tu "nanu pramāṇam ity evaṃ pratyakṣādi na gṛhyate" iti, "pramāṇaṃ grahaṇāt pūrvaṃ svarūpeṇaiva saṃsthitam" iti ca vārttikaṃ, tat pramāṇam asmi-ity anena-ākāreṇa-agrahaṇāt. tathā ca pramāṇam aham ity evaṃ pratyakṣādi na gṛhyate ity āha.*

[51] That is, it can be ascertained simply by one or the other alternative (i.e., *pramāṇa* or non-*pramāṇa*) being "left over."

[52] p.49.1-3: *nanu yadi prāmāṇyam jñānotpattisamaye 'vagmyate, yad utpattau pramāṇatayā na cakāsti, tad apramāṇam iti, utpattāv eva pariśeṣān niścetuṃ śakyaṃ vināpi kāraṇadoṣabādhakapratyayābhyām iti, aprāmāṇyam api svata eva-āpadyeta.*

As I have suggested in Chapter 3, Pārthasārathi's interlocutor (who here again resembles Uṃveka) here crucially mistakes Pārthasārathi's position, owing precisely to his own sense that *prāmāṇya* must obtain at the *outcome* of the epistemic process – in which case, the claim that *prāmāṇya* obtains "prima facie" (i.e., at the outset) would mean we are stuck with whatever judgment is initially made. This then sets up Pārthasārathi's clarification, which will crucially involve his emphasizing that both *pramāṇas* and non-*pramāṇas* initially present themselves to us as (phenomenologically) "valid," and that this is not a problem insofar as *prāmāṇya* merely *starts* the epistemic process.

Nor is it [used] with *pramāṇa* as its referent. For if it were thus, then, because of the non-appearance of validity in non-*pramāṇas*, invalidity would be proven by elimination. Rather, this word "*sva-*" is reflexive to *awareness*.[53] Validity appears precisely because there is awareness. And thus, validity is experienced (*bodhyate*), even though itself non-existent, even based on an awareness which [turns out] not [to have been] a *pramāṇa*; hence, there is not proof-by-elimination of invalidity. But *in*-validity is experienced subsequently, by way of the form of a cognized (*pratīta*) exception to validity.[54] As [Kumārila] said [in the *Bṛhaṭṭīkā*]: "Therefore, validity is always (*sarvatra*) intrinsically established as inherent; it is removed by cognitions of defects in the cause or by overriders."[55] "Established" means "obtained," i.e., understood. It says "*always*," not only in the case of *pramāṇas* – which is to say, [prima facie justification obtains] simply when there is awareness.[56] The argument [thus] has purchase (*pravṛtti*) with respect to *awareness, simpliciter*, [and] not [only] with respect to awarenesses that are *pramāṇas*; this is the main point.[57]

And this reflection on whether the validity of *pramāṇas* is intrinsic or dependent is not [simply] with reference to (*adhikṛtya*) awarenesses that are *pramāṇas*; rather, those that are based on awarenesses that are in contact with more than one mutually exclusive

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[53] Cf., n.1, above.

[54] p.49.4-8: *maivaṃ vocaḥ. na hi svaśabdo 'yaṃ prāmāṇyaparatayā prayuktaḥ prāmāṇyād eva prāmāṇyaṃ bhāti-iti. nāpi pramāṇaparatayā. yadi hi tathā syāt, tato 'pramāṇeṣu prāmāṇyānavabhāsāt pariśeṣasiddham aprāmāṇyaṃ syāt. vijñānaparas tv ayaṃ svaśabdaḥ. vijñānād eva prāmāṇyaṃ bhāti-iti. tataś ca-apramāṇajñānād api prāmāṇyam eva-ātmano 'sad api bodhyata iti, na-aprāmāṇyasya pariśeṣasiddhiḥ. aprāmāṇyan tu pratītaprāmāṇyāpavādarūpeṇa paścād bodhyate.*
On my reading, this is one of the most important passages for understanding Pārthasārathi's interpretation of the doctrine of *svataḥ prāmāṇya*.

[55] Clearly, this passage from the *Bṛhaṭṭīkā* (which is reprcduced at *Tattvasaṃgraha* 2862) expresses the same idea as *Ślokavārttika* II.53, the verse that Pārthasārathi has most persistently urged against alternative interpretations of the doctrine.

[56] p.49.9-11: *yathā-āha: "tasmāt svataḥ pramāṇatvaṃ sarvatra-autsargikaṃ sthitam / bādakāraṇaduṣṭatvabodhābhyāṃ tad apodyate //" iti. sthitaṃ, prāptaṃ pratipannam ity arthaḥ. sarvatra-iti, na kevalaṃ pramāṇeṣu jñānamātre iti yāvat.*

[57] p.49.12-13: *jñānamātrādhikāreṇa vicārasya pravṛttiḥ, na tu pramāṇajñānādhikāreṇa-iti niṣkarṣaḥ.* This line, which is underlined in Shastri's edition, is absent from the Gaekwad edition of Pārthasārathi's text. But the same idea is expressed in the following lines, anyway.

(*parasparopamardaka*) extreme, such as "is this a post or a man?", and those that are redundant (*atirikta*) because of being mnemonic awarenesses, and those [that are determinate, i.e.,] whose forms are like "this is a pot, this is a cloth" – this reflection is with reference to *all* of these awarenesses, because [Kumārila] begins [his whole discussion of the subject] by saying, [at *Ślokavārttika* II.33,] "This, *whose object is all awarenesses*, is to be investigated."[58]

[p.50] And if [this topic] were considered with only *pramāṇas* as object, then, because of the object's [having to] be established for both parties to the debate, all that would be conclusively shown (*etāvat siddhāntyeta*) would be the intrinsic validity of those [objects] which are [already] established as being *pramāṇas* for both [parties to the debate]. And thus, because of the Veda's not being a [possible] object of inquiry, since is *not* a *pramāṇa* established for both parties, its intrinsic validity could not be established. In this case, a reflection that is not conducive (*anupayogin*) to the validity of the Vedas would be pointless (*akartavyā*),[59] like an inquiry regarding a crow's teeth. But when, [instead,] intrinsic validity and dependent invalidity are being proven with respect to mere awareness (*jñānamātraṃ tv adhikṛtya*), [then] validity, in the form of the thusness of an object, could be understood as intrinsically belonging to the Veda, too. Because of the absence of awareness of faults in [its] cause, it becomes established without exception; hence, [given my emphasis on the fact that we are concerned with the intrinsic validity of *all* awarenesses, and not simply with those that turn out to be veridical], this reflection is purposeful.[60]

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[58] p.49.14-18: *na ca pramāṇajñānāny adhikṛtya cintā-iyaṃ pramāṇānāṃ prāmāṇyaṃ, svataḥ parato vā-iti. kin tarhi, yāni tāvat "sthāṇur vā puruṣo vā"-iti parasparopamardakānekakoṭisaṃsparśijñānebhyaḥ, smṛtijñānebhyaś ca-atiriktāni "ghaṭo 'yaṃ paṭo 'yam" ityevaṃrūpāṇi jñānāni, tāni sarvāṇy adhikṛtya cintā-iyam. "sarvavijñānaviṣayam idaṃ tāvat parikṣyatām" ity upakramāt.*
Again, a very important passage for understanding Pārthasārathi's interpretation.

[59] That is, the whole point in Kumārila's raising the question of validity was precisely to secure the validity of the Vedas.

[60] p.50.1-7: *yadi ca pramāṇāny eva viṣayikṛtya cintyeta, tato viṣayasya-ubhayavādisiddhatvāt yāny ubhayoḥ pramāṇatayā prasiddhāni, teṣāṃ prāmāṇyaṃ svata ity etāvat siddhāntyeta. Tataś ca vedasya-ubhayavādisiddhaprāmāṇyābhāvena vicārāviṣayatvān na-asya svataḥ prāmāṇyaṃ sādhitaṃ syāt. Tatra*

[Objection:] But validity is not simply the quiddity of an object (*arthatathātvamātram*), since [if that were the case,] there [would be] the unwanted consequence of memory, too, having quiddity.

[Response:] True; validity is not merely this much. But in this treatise, whether this much alone[61] is intrinsic or dependent is considered.[62] For the word "*pramāṇa*" refers to the producer of certainty regarding an object's being-thus, which is not being considered (*ananusandhīyamāna*) as [already] having been understood [i.e., by some prior awareness].[63] The condition (*bhāva*) of this [i.e., of being a *pramāṇa*] is validity. And what is the condition of *that* [i.e., of validity]? [An object's][64] not being considered (*ananusandhīyamānatvam*) as [already] having been understood by another *pramāṇa*; an object's quiddity; and an awareness's being the producer of certainty regarding that [i.e., an object's quiddity] – these three things together [constitute] validity, which is the motivator (*bhāvakam*) of the idea and the word '*pramāṇa*.'[65]

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vedaprāmāṇyānupayogini cintā kākadantaparikṣāvad akartavyā syāt. Jñānamātraṃ tv adhikṛtya svataḥ prāmāṇye, parataś ca-aprāmāṇye sādhyamāne, vedasyāpi svatas tāvad viṣayatathātvarūpaṃ prāmāṇyam avagataṃ syāt. Kāraṇadoṣajñānāder abhāvān nirapavādaṃ sthitaṃ bhavatīti prayojanavatīyaṃ cintā.

Here, as I suggested in Chapter 3, it is particularly clear that Pārthasārathi has, like Alston, reversed the usual direction of explanation.

[61] That is, an awareness's conferring justification regarding an object's being-thus; cf., n.65, for an unpacking of this.

[62] p.50.8-9: *Nanu na-arthatathātvamātraṃ prāmāṇyam, smṛter api tathātvaprasaṅgāt. Satyam. Na tāvanmātraṃ prāmāṇyam. Asmiṃs tu prakaraṇe tāvanmātram eva svataḥ, parato vā-iti cintyate.*

That is, Pārthasārathi has not here been concerned to elaborate *all* of the conditions that must obtain for an awareness to be judged a *pramāṇa* (such as, e.g., the fact of its yielding new information, with its having been generally agreed among Indian philosophers that such is the case, and that memory is therefore not to be counted a *pramāṇa*). Rather, he is simply asking whether the fact of their having to do with *validity* (*prāmāṇya*) is intrinsic. He thus leaves open the possibility of disqualifying memory on other grounds, which he then proceeds to give.

[63] Here, then, Pārthasārathi is providing some account of how, on his account of *svataḥ prāmāṇya*, a mnemonic awareness will nevertheless fail to count as a *pramāṇa*.

[64] The insertion is per Rāmānujācārya; cf., p.50, line 10 of the commentary (*arthasya pramāṇāntarādhigatatayā...*).

[65] p.50.10-13: *Pramāṇaśabdo hy adhigatatayā-ananusandhīyamānatathābhūtārthaniścāyakavācī. Tasya bhāvaḥ prāmāṇyam. Kaś ca tasya bhāvaḥ? Pramāṇāntarādhigatatayā-ananusandhīyamānatvaṃ, tathābhāvaś ca-arthasya, jñānasya tanniścayajanakatā-iti tritayaṃ militaṃ pramāṇabuddhiśabdayor bhāvakaṃ prāmāṇyam.*

Among other things, Pārthasārathi here repeats his claim that *prāmāṇya* is, in effect, that *in virtue of which pramāṇas* are what they are (as opposed its being what is *yielded* by *pramāṇas*; cf., n.39, above). He has also provided three criteria that an awareness must meet if it is to be judged a *pramāṇa*: the awareness must cause us to ascertain an object to be thus-and-so (*jñānasya tanniścayajanakatā*, "an awareness's being

In regard to this, an object's not being considered as [already] having been understood is not understood based on the nature of awareness, since it is to be known (*gamyatvena*) [only] by an appropriate non-apprehension (*anupalabdhi*).[66] For an awareness of a pot doesn't cause one to understand the pot's *not* being understood based on something else.[67] [p.51] Nor is there understanding of this by way of awareness of efficacies, etc. Thus, the inquiry [of this chapter] does not [concern] whether [validity] is intrinsic or dependent with respect to this.[68] Rather, it was proven that validity – which is defined by the quiddity of an object – is intrinsic in order to refute that invalidity, defined as an object's not-being-thus, which [Śabara] raised as a doubt by saying "But [injunction can speak] falsely."[69]

But that text which says "the production of validity, which consists in ascertainment" – that, too, is uncontradicted [on my interpretation of the doctrine in

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the producer of certainty regarding that"); the object thus represented must actually *be* that way (*arthasya tathābhāva*); and (what he has here adduced in order to meet the objection concerning memory) the knowledge thus yielded must be novel. As Pārthasārathi has been stressing with his phenomenological emphasis on how awareness "appears" to us, any non-doubtful awareness manifestly meets the first criterion; and the whole point of this chapter is to argue that we are prima facie justified, with respect to such awarenesses, in taking the second criterion also to be met. The third criterion, however, can only be determined subsequent to the awareness in question – specifically, as he will go on to say, by an awareness in the form of a "non-apprehension" (cf., n.66).

[66] The reference here is to the characteristically Bhāṭṭa view that *anupalabdhi* ("non-apprehension") is itself a *pramāṇa* – specifically, one bearing on the fact of non-existence (*abhāva*), with, e.g., the non-existence of a pot being "known" by the fact of there being no apprehension (*anupalabdhi*) of one. Thus, the subsequent *pramāṇa* that warrants one in taking an awareness to have yielded new information (that is, which warrants one in taking the awareness to bear on something not already previously understood) is that of "non-apprehension" – i.e., simply the fact of an *absence* of any knowledge of having previously understood the thing in question. In saying that this is not understood "based on the nature of awareness" (*jñānasvarūpāt*), Pārthasārathi is conceding that this aspect of validity does not, in fact, appear "intrinsically" (*svataḥ*).

[67] p.50.14-15: *Tatra yad etad arthasya-avagatatayā-ananusandhiyamānatvaṃ, tad yogyānupalabdhigamyatvena na jñānasvarūpād gamyate; na hi ghaṭajñānaṃ ghaṭasya-anyato 'navagatatāṃ pratipādayati.*

[68] That is, with respect to whether or not an awareness yields novel information. Again, then, Pārthasārathi is conceding that this aspect of validity is not among the features that appear intrinsically.

[69] p.51.1-3: *Nāpi guṇajñānādibhis tadavagatiḥ. Tena na tatra svataḥ parato vā-iti cintā. Yad eva tu "nanv atathābhūtam" ity anena-ayathārthatvalakṣaṇam aprāmāṇyam āśaṅkitaṃ, tatparihārāya-arthatathātvalakṣaṇam eva prāmāṇyaṃ svata it sādhyate.*

Here, Pārthasārathi alludes to the objection which, for Śabara, got this whole discussion going – i.e., *nanu atathābhūtam apy arthaṃ brūyāc codanā* ("but a [Vedic] injunction, too, could speak something false").

question]. That is to say: That which effects certainty regarding the quiddity of an object, precisely that is the producer of certainty whose object is that [i.e., quiddity of an object]. For that which produces awareness regarding (*apekṣayā*) an object of awareness, that very thing becomes the producer regarding awareness.[70]

And certainty, too, because of being the occasion (*nimitta*) for the function of the word "*pramāṇa*," *is* validity. Thus, for the [Buddhist] opponent who is [trying to] prove that validity, defined by the quiddity of an object, is ascertained based on awareness of efficacies, this text is not improbable (*na-asaṃgata*): "But the production of validity, which consists in ascertainment, is easily gained (*svadhyavasānam*), by virtue of its being the effect of awareness of efficacies in the cause, or of correspondence, by virtue of its being a thing."[71]

But if it is directly said that validity, consisting of certainty, is intrinsically *produced*,[72] then, that being the case, it would have to be said that *in*-validity, too, was dependently *produced*. Otherwise, this's being an opposed position wouldn't obtain: "Validity is *produced* intrinsically, and *in*-validity is *understood* dependently."

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[70] p.51.4-6: *Yas tu niścayātmakaprāmāṇyotpādanam iti granthaḥ, so 'py aviruddhaḥ. Tathā hi yad arthatathātvaniścāyakaṃ, tad eva tadviṣayasya niścayasya-utpādakaṃ bhavati. Yad eva hi jñeyāpekṣayā jñāpakaṃ, tad eva jñānāpekṣayā janakaṃ bhavati.*

Note that he Pārthasārathi here characterizes the quoted text as a *grantha* (cf., n.37, above), which suggests that this is indeed a direct quotation – and perhaps one from Kumārila's *Bṛhaṭṭīkā*. While the attribution of this *to Kumārila* might give pause (i.e., insofar as this is, after all, a passage representing the view of a Buddhist interlocutor), recall that the exegetical point here has to do with whether or not the various interpretations can be squared with *all* aspects of Kumārila's text – including those having to do with his framing of the *pūrvapakṣa* (in this regard, too, cf., n.37).

[71] p.51.6-9: *Niścayo 'pi ca pramāṇaśabdapravṛttinimittatvāt, prāmāṇyam eva. Tena-arthatathātvalakṣaṇaṃ prāmāṇyaṃ guṇajñānān niścīyata iti pratipādayataḥ pūrvapakṣiṇo na-asaṃgato "niścayātmakaprāmāṇyotpādanaṃ tu vastusvarūpatvāt saṃvādaguṇajñānakāryatvena svadhyavasānam" iti granthaḥ.*

Pārthasārathi here again adduces the passage also occurring in Sucaritamiśra (cf., n.37, above). Shastri's edition here gives a meaningless cross reference: "*Nyā. Ra. pu.* 51." The reference is, in fact, retained from the Gaekwad edition of the text, and is to p.51 of that very text; for this passage first occurs at p.51 of the Gaekwad edition. The "editor" of my edition, then, has simply left the previous editor's reference to this very text on the page, even though the pagination is different!

[72] As Sucaritamiśra holds; cf., *Kāśikā*, p.89 (as cited in Chapter 3, n.105), where Sucarita drives toward the conclusion that "hence, certainty is produced; what validity could there be other than this?" (*Ato jāto niścayaḥ. Kim anyat prāmāṇyaṃ bhaviṣyati*).

Therefore, validity is understood intrinsically, and in-validity dependently – this is the meaning of the treatise; for in this way, both reasoning and the text become appropriate.[73]

Here is a brief statement of the view against which [the Mīmāṃsaka doctrine has been elaborated] (*tad ayam atra pūrvottarapakṣasaṃkṣepaḥ*)[74]: Since we see awarenesses of a pot based [sometimes] on a pot, and [sometimes] on what is not a pot, a pot can't be ascertained simply by that [i.e., by awareness which seems to be of a pot]. Thus, the arising, from a pot, of a previous awareness of a pot is to be ascertained, after ascertainment that there is a pot which exists as the cause of that [awareness], only based on the perception of pragmatic efficacy.[75] But awareness of pragmatic efficacy, by virtue of [its] nondeviation, is a *pramāṇa* intrinsically[76]; producing certainty regarding pragmatic efficacy, [p.52] [an awareness of pragmatic efficacy] can bring about certainty regarding the validity of the previous awareness. So, too, even correspondence with another awareness does not operate regarding arising from another object; hence, based on that, too, there is ascertainment of the quiddity of an object. Thus, an awareness which is to be produced by an efficacious cause (*guṇavat-kāraṇam*) becomes like its object; hence, the quiddity of an object can be ascertained based on ascertainment of the efficacy of the cause [of the awareness]. Therefore, the ascertainment of an awareness's validity is precisely *dependent*; its validity, defined by the quiddity of its object, cannot

[73] p.51.9-13: *Yadi punar idam eva sākṣād ucyate niścayātmakaṃ prāmāṇyaṃ svato jāyata iti, tathā saty aprāmāṇyam api parato jāyata iti vaktavyam. Anyathā-asya pratipakṣatvam eva na syāt: prāmāṇyaṃ svato jāyate 'prāmāṇyaṃ parato 'vagamyata iti. Tasmāt svataḥ parataś ca prāmāṇyam aprāmāṇyaṃ ca-avagamyata ity eva prakarṇārthaḥ. Evaṃ hi nyāyo granthaś ca samañjasā bhavati.*
I am unable to locate the quoted text, which is perhaps from the *Bṛhaṭṭikā*.

[74] Having so far given all of his attention to canvassing alternative interpretations of the doctrine of *svataḥ prāmāṇya* variously put forward by other Mīmāṃsakas, Pārthasārathi here turns to a sketch of the view that (all Mīmāṃsakas will agree) is the target of the Mīmāṃsaka critique – with his sketch here amounting to a much better representation of characteristically Buddhist arguments than, it seems to me, Kumārila offers in the *Ślokavārttika*.

[75] p.51.15-17: *Tad ayam atra pūrvottarapakṣasaṃkṣepaḥ: Ghaṭād aghaṭāc ca ghaṭajñānadarśanān na tanmātreṇa ghaṭo niścetuṃ śakyate. Tena-arthakriyādarśanād eva taddhetubhūtaghaṭaniścayapuraḥsaraṃ pūrvasya ghaṭajñānasya ghaṭād utpattir niścetavyā.*

[76] Cf., Chapter 3, n.128, for relevant passages to this effect from Kamalaśīla and Manorathanandin.

be ascertained intrinsically, because of variability. And there is no validity regarding an object that has not been ascertained; hence, the invalidity of awareness is intrinsic. Moreover, a previous absence of certainty can't be produced by awareness of defects. But certainty, since it is a thing, can be produced by awareness of efficacies, etc. Therefore, validity, in the form of an object's quiddity, is ascertained dependently – so goes the prior [Buddhist] position.[77]

But this is the definitive conclusion: Awareness does not produce certainty regarding an object by way of non-deviation; rather, it simply [does so] *intrinsically*. For if it couldn't ascertain intrinsically, then, that being the case, there would be a complete absence of certainty, and hence, there would follow the blindness of the whole world. For an object not ascertained by itself can't be ascertained by something else, since the other one, too, would lack the capacity, just like the first. For just as an awareness of a pot is seen even when there is no pot, and hence is without certainty – in the same way, awareness of pragmatic efficacy, too, is seen in the condition (*avasthā*) of sleep, precisely when there is no pragmatic efficacy – hence, it [i.e., pragmatic efficacy] can't be ascertained by that [i.e., by a putative awareness thereof], either. Still less can certainty regarding a pot [be produced] by that [i.e., by pragmatic efficacy] – hence, there would follow the complete (*āyātam*) blindness of the whole world.[78]

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[77] p.51.17-52.8: *Arthakriyājñānan tv avyabhicārāt svataḥ pramāṇam arthakriyāṃ niścāya-* [p.52] *-yac chaknoti pūrvajñāsya prāmāṇyaṃ niścāyayituṃ. Tathā jñānātnarasaṃvādo 'pi na-arthāntarād utpattau ghaṭata iti, tato 'py arthatathātvaniścayaḥ. Tathā guṇavatkāraṇajanyaṃ vijñānaṃ yathārtham eva bhavatiti kāraṇaguṇāvadhāraṇād api śakyate 'rthasya tathābhāvo niścetum. Tasmāt parata eva jñānasya prāmāṇyaniścayaḥ, na svataḥ tasya-arthatathātvalakṣaṇaṃ prāmāṇyaṃ niścetuṃ śakyam, anaikāntikatvāt. Aniścite ca-arthe, na-asti prāmāṇyam ity aprāmāṇyam eva jñānasya svataḥ. Kiñ ca niścayaprāgabhāvo na doṣajñānena śakyate janayitum. Niścayas tu vastutvāc chakyate guṇajñānādinā janayitum. Tasmāt parata eva-arthatathātvarūpaprāmāṇyaṃ niściyata iti pūrvaḥ pakṣaḥ.*

[78] p.52.9-14: *Siddhāntas tu: na jñānam avyabhicāramukhena-eva-arthaṃ niścāyayati. Kintu svata eva. Yadi hi svato niścetuṃ na śaknuyāt, tathā sati niścayātyāntābhāva eva syād ity āndhyam eva-aśeṣasya jagato bhavet. Na hi svato 'niścito 'rthaḥ parato niścetuṃ śakyate, parasyāpi tadvad eva-asāmārthyāt. Yathā hi ghaṭajñānam asaty api ghaṭe dṛṣṭam ity aniścāyakaṃ, tathā-arthakriyājñānam apy asatyām eva-artyakriyāyāṃ svapnāvasthāyāṃ dṛṣṭam iti, na tenāpi sā niścetuṃ śakyā. Natarāṃ tayā ghaṭaniścaya ity āyātam āndhyam aśeṣasya jagataḥ.*

Pārthasārathi here effectively restates the argument Kumārila develops at *Ślokavārttika* II.47, ff.

[p.53] [The Buddhist interlocutor suggests another tack:] Perhaps what is expressed by the term 'pragmatic efficacy' is not things like carrying water, but rather, simply awareness, consisting of pleasure.[79] And every awareness of pleasure is intrinsically a *pramāṇa* with respect to itself, owing to non-deviation. [Pārthasārathi rejoins:] If this were said, then, that being the case, fine!, let there be ascertainment of pragmatic efficacy. Even so, the correspondence (*yāthārthya*) of a prior awareness couldn't be known by that, because of the arising of pleasure, during sleep, based on awareness such as that of anointing with sandal paste, even though [such dream awarenesses] are not correspondent.[80]

Moreover, ascertainment of a prior awareness [could only be] by way of pragmatic efficacy when the necessary connection (*avinābhāva*)[81] is apprehended; for an inference has as its scope the cause, based on [observation of] an effect. And there's no possibility of apprehending a relation with respect to an unapprehended relatum. Thus, on the occasion of apprehending a relation, ascertainment of a pot is necessarily to be accepted as based simply on awareness of the pot.[82]

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[79] That is, perhaps "pragmatic efficacy" means more generally the gratification of whatever desire it is with respect to which something had been judged "pragmatically efficacious" in the first place.

[80] p.53.1-4: *Atha-arthakriyāśabdena na-udakāharaṇādikam ucyate, kintu jñānam eva sukhātmakam. Sarvañ ca sukhajñānaṃ svātmani svata eva pramāṇam avyabhicārād ity ucyeta, tathā sati bhavatu nāma-arthakriyāniścayaḥ. Tathāpi tu na tayā pūrvajñānasya śakyaṃ yāthārthyaṃ vijñātum, ayathārthād api svapne candanalepādijñānāt sukhotpatteḥ.*

[81] That is, between the pragmatic efficacy and its *relatum*, the thing to which it allegedly pertains.

[82] p.53.5-7: *Api ca gṛhītāvinābhāvayā-arthakriyayā pūrvavijñānasya viṣayaniścayaḥ. Anumānaṃ hy etat kāryāt kāraṇagocaram. Na ca-agṛhīte sambandhini sambandhagrahaṇasambhavaḥ. Tena sambandhagrahaṇasamaye 'vaśyaṃ ghaṭajñānād eva ghaṭaniścayo 'ṅgīkartavyaḥ.*

The argument here represents, I think, what is potentially a very interesting critique of the account of relations expressed in Dharmakīrti's *Sambandhaparīkṣā*. Dharmakīrti's account of the two possible kinds of relations is meant to ground inference in the alleged *necessity* of *both* the *tādātmya* and *tadutpatti* kinds of connection. (Cf., Chapter 2, pp.55-57.) Pārthasārathi's point here is that the Buddhist may wish to infer from *arthakriyākaritva* the fact that there must have been a pot as the necessary cause of that effect – but this inference only gets off the ground if it's already presupposed that it's a *pot* which is necessarily the cause of such an effect – and if we already knew *that*, we wouldn't need the appeal to *arthakriyākaritva*. (Cf., Chapter 2, n.78, on the circularity that I take to be involved in Dharmakīrti's appeal to a putatively necessary sort of connection.)

The same is to be said regarding awareness of correspondence and awareness of efficacies; for an efficacy could not be ascertained by an awareness of [another] efficacy[83] – a fortiori, the validity of a prior awareness! So, too, correspondence: What is called correspondence is [simply] another awareness which has that as its object. What's the distinction of that from a prior awareness, according to which what hadn't been ascertained by the previous awareness is ascertained by that? Even if certainty is to be produced based on the fact of being a thing, nevertheless, it is produced by an *awareness*, not by anything else. Therefore, validity is precisely intrinsic, and invalidity is dependent, to be ascertained based on awareness of defects or on an overriding awareness.[84]

[p.54] [Objection:] But, because of its not being a thing, invalidity is not to be produced by a defect – and what is not to be produced by that [i.e., by a defect] can't be ascertained based on that [i.e., a defect]. [Response:] We are not saying, first of all, that invalidity, *in the form of previously non-existent certainty*, is understood by defects; rather, [it's invalidity] *in the form of non-correspondence with an object* [that we're saying is thus understood]; for that can be ascertained by awareness of defects, because of non-correspondence's being *caused* by the defect, since we see non-correspondence when the causes are defective. Since there is no defect in the Veda, either, its intrinsic validity stands unnegated.[85]

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[83] That is, since that awareness of an efficacy would, as an awareness, *itself* require another efficacy as its warrant, etc.

[84] p.53.8-12: *Evaṃ guṇajñānasaṃvādajñānayor api vācyam. Na hi guṇajñānād guṇo 'pi niścetuṃ śakyate. Kiṃ punaḥ pūrvajñānaprāmāṇyam. Tathā saṃvādo 'pi. Saṃvādo nāma tadviṣayaṃ jñānāntaram. Tasya pūrvajñānāt ko viśeṣaḥ, yena pūrvajñānāniścitam anena niściyate? Yady api vastutvāj janyo niścayaḥ, tathāpi jñānena-eva janyate, na-anyena. Tasmāt svata eva prāmāṇyaṃ, parataś ca-aprāmāṇyaṃ doṣajñānāt, bādhakajñānād vā niśceyam.*

[85] p.54.1-5: *Nanv avastutvān na doṣajanyam aprāmāṇyaṃ bhavati, atajjanyaṃ ca na tato 'vadhārayituṃ śakyam. Ucyate: Na tāvan niścayaprāgabhāvarūpam aprāmāṇyaṃ doṣair gamyata iti brūmaḥ; kintv, arthānyathātvarūpam. Tad dhi śakyaṃ doṣajñānena niścetum, doṣanimittakatvād ayathārthatvasya. Duṣṭeṣu kāraṇeṣv ayathārthatvadarśanāt. Vede 'pi svatas tāvat prāmāṇyaṃ doṣābhāvād anapoditaṃ sthitam.*

But how is non-correspondence understood as caused by defects, and not caused by absence of efficacies? For non-correspondence is always known when causes are defective, and when there is a lack (*vidhura*) of efficacies. In this regard, then, what's the basis for this distinction [which holds that] a defect alone is the cause, and not lack of efficacies? Therefore, even if invalidity is seen dependently, nevertheless, because of the impossibility of seeing this, owing precisely to the absence of efficacies, and because of the lack, in the Veda, of the virtue (*guṇa*) which [consists in] being composed by a reliable person, there follows, based on the absence of efficacies – i.e., dependently – the invalidity of the Veda, even though its validity had been obtained naturally (*svarasaprāptaprāmāṇya*).[86]

[The response to this doubt:] This is to be said: What we postulate (*kalpanā*) arises following what is *seen*; it [should] not [arise] by way of contradiction with what is seen. Thus, if, since (*yathā*) the intrinsically obtained validity of the Veda is not contradicted, then (*tathā*) if [a manifest contradiction] can't be postulated, it doesn't make sense to postulate a contradiction. Thus, even if absence of efficacies and faults are seen in familiar (*prasiddha*) [examples of] non-correspondent awarenesses, nevertheless, even though the Veda be lacking in efficacies, since its validity is seen, let this [i.e., what is plainly seen] not be contradicted. Hence, it's postulated that the non-correspondence of awarenesses such as that of silver with respect to [what is really] mother-of-pearl is

[86] p.54.6-11: *Kathaṃ punar avagamyate doṣanimittam ayathārthatvaṃ, na tu guṇābhāvanimittam iti? Sarvatra hi guṇavidhureṣu duṣṭeṣu ca kāraṇeṣv ayathārthatvaṃ jñāyate. tatra kuto 'yaṃ vivekaḥ doṣa eva nimittaṃ, na guṇavaidhuryam iti? Tasmād yady api parata eva-aprāmāṇyopalakṣaṇaṃ, tathāpi guṇābhāvād eva-upalakṣaṇasaṃbhavāt, vede ca-āptapraṇitatvaguṇāyogāt svarasaprāptaprāmāṇyasyāpi vedasya parata eva guṇābhāvād aprāmāṇyam āpadyata iti.*

Note that the objection Pārthasārathi here anticipates – viz., that appeal to *absence of efficacies* ought to count in exactly the same way as appeal to *presence of deficiencies* – is highly relevant to the issue of the alleged transcendence (*apauruṣeyatva*) of the Vedas. Indeed, it seems to me that the objection he here anticipates amounts to something like the objection that the Vedas cannot count as a *pramāṇa* insofar as they are *unfalsifiable*. Taber (1992: 217) makes what seems to me the same objection, expressing it in such a way as to make clear the relation of this issue to that of falsifiability: "Ultimately, however, we must judge this interpretation of Kumārila's defense of the authority of the Veda a failure, also. Clearly, the claim that the Veda is without a source, hence, a fortiori, without a *defective* source, is highly implausible. Indeed, it seems that there could be no cause more defective than a non-existent one!... The Veda stands uncontradicted, it seems, merely by default." It is at this point that Taber cites, with approval, Pollock's related reference to Popper; cf., Chapter 3, n.174.

based on faults. For otherwise, one could postulate that non-correspondence has as its cause (*nibandhanam*) the [mere fact of] being awareness, since we see the [mere fact of] being awareness in all non-*pramāṇas*. In this regard, then, just as, since we see [the mere fact of] being awareness in correspondent awareness such as perceptual ones, too, [p.55] non-correspondence isn't caused by that [i.e., by the fact of being awareness] – in the same way, absence of efficacies, by virtue of being seen in the Veda, which *is* correspondent, is not the cause of [the Veda's] being non-correspondent. If it's said that [the validity of things like perceptual awareness obtains] intrinsically,[87] then the same [applies] in the case of the Veda, too, since otherwise there would be devotion (*abhiniveśa*) to nihilism (*nāstikya*).[88]

Moreover, even given the absence of efficacies in awarenesses such as that of silver with respect to [what is really] mother-of-pearl, since we see real things, in the form of whiteness and shininess,[89] correspondence is not dependent on efficacies. Correspondence is based precisely on [the awareness's] own cause,[90] and non-

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[87] That is, if you admit the Mīmāṃsaka argument, from infinite regress, for *svataḥ prāmāṇya*.

[88] p.54.13-55.3: *Tad abhidhiyate: Dṛṣṭānusāriṇi hi kalpanā bhavati, na dṛṣṭavaiparityena. Tena vedasya svata eva prāptaṃ prāmāṇyaṃ yathā na viruddhyate, tathā cet kalpayituṃ śakyate, tato viruddhaṃ na kalpayituṃ yuktam. Tena yady api prasiddheṣv ayathārthajñāneṣu guṇābhāvo doṣāś ca dṛṣṭāḥ, tathāpi vede guṇābhāve 'pi prāmāṇyadarśanāt, tan mā bādhiti doṣanimittam eva-ayarthārthatvaṃ śukti[kā?]rajatādijñānānāṃ kalpyate. Anyathā hi jñānatvanibandhanam apy ayathārthatvaṃ kalpyeta, sarveṣv apramāṇeṣu jñānatvadarśanāt. Tatra yathaiva yathārtheṣv api pratyakṣādiṣu jñānatvadarśanān na* [p.55] *tannimittam ayathārthatvam. Evaṃ guṇābhāvo 'pi yathārthe vede dṛṣṭatvān na-ayathārthatvasya nibandhanam. Asiddhaṃ tasya yathārthatvam iti cet, pratyakṣādināṃ vā kutaḥ siddham. Svata iti cet, tad vede 'pi samānam anyatra nāstikyābhiniveśāt. Tasmān na tanninibandhanam aprāmāṇyam.*

Here, we see a compelling indication of the prior axiological commitments that are, for Pārthasārathi (as for all Mīmāṃsakas), non-negotiable – for when he adduces what he takes to be the absurd and manifestly unwanted consequence that otherwise one would be devoted to nihilism, he is saying, in effect, *we wouldn't be Vaidikas*. Clearly, though, this only has any purchase against those who *are* Vaidikas. Crucially, then, it matters very much that this whole argument – i.e., concerning whether invalidity's being caused by *defects* could just as readily be understood in terms of its being caused by *absence of efficacies* – has been put in the mouth of a fellow Mīmāṃsaka, and the position would be greatly weakened if instead this issue had been engaged with, say, a Buddhist interlocutor. For a Buddhist would clearly agree with Taber (cf., 86, above) that "there could be no cause more defective than a non-existent one!" And if, against this view, a Mīmāṃsaka sees the force of Pārthasārathi's argument here, it is only because he is already committed to crediting the authority of the Vedas.

[89] That is, even a cognition that mistakenly yields the judgment that a piece of mother-of-pearl is silver may nevertheless accurately perceive its shape, color, etc. Note that this is the same argument that Pārthasārathi had earlier put in the mouth of an interlocutor whose position resembles that of Uṃveka, and that actually occurs in Pārthasārathi's own commentary on the *Ślokavārttika* (cf., n.7, above).

[90] That is, correspondence *itself* (and not our awareness thereof).

correspondence on defects. That being the case, awarenesses of silver with respect to [what is really] mother-of-pearl bring into our ken (*gocarayanti*) real things, existing thus, such as whiteness, based on [the awareness's] own cause; and, based on defects, [unreal things] such as [the fact of] being silver, [which is the part that, in this example, turns out to be false]. Therefore, it's established that the validity of all awarenesses is intrinsic;[91] and it is established, without exception, that that [i.e., validity][92] belongs to the Veda.

"The ascertainment of intrinsic validity has been effected by Pārthasārathimiśra in order to turn back the delusion created by the disagreement of commentators [on Kumārila]." [*Kārikā* 4][93]

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[91] Note that here, Pārthasārathi rephrases *Ślokavārttika* II.47, substituting *sarvajñānānām* for Kumārila's *sarvapramāṇānām* (in order to clarify that Pārthasārathi's whole interpretation depends on taking *svataḥ* as reflexive to *all* awarenesses, and not simply to those that turn out to have been veridical).

[92] p.55.5-9: *Api ca śuktikārajatādijñāneṣu guṇābhāve 'pi śuklatvabhāsvaratvādirūpāṇāṃ tathābhūtānām eva darśanān na guṇāyattaṃ yathārthatvam. Svakāraṇād eva yathārthatvaṃ, doṣāc ca-ayathārthatvam iti. Tathā sati śukitkārajatādijñānāni svakāraṇavaśād doṣāc ca tathābhūtaṃ śuklatvādyatathābhūtaṃ ca rajatatvādikaṃ gocarayanti-ity upapannaṃ bhavati. Tasmāt svataḥ siddhaṃ prāmāṇyaṃ sarvajñānānām. Tac ca vedasya-anapoditam iti siddham.*

[93] p.55.10-11: *Pārthasārathimiśreṇa svataḥ prāmāṇyanirṇayaḥ / vyākhyāvivādasaṃjātamohavyāvṛttaye kṛtaḥ //* (4).

APPENDIX II
An Annotated Translation of Candrakīrti's Critique of Dignāga (*Prasannapadā* 55.11 to 75.13)

Introduction

The standard edition of the *Prasannapadā* is that of Louis de La Vallée Poussin (1903-1913), which was printed as volume IV in the Bibliotheca Buddhica. Based on additional manuscripts from Nepal, J. W. de Jong (1978) suggested extensive revisions to this edition. The edition of P. L. Vaidya (no.10 in the Buddhist Sanskrit Texts series, 1960), which provides the pagination from the Biliotheca Buddhica edition, is reliable (though obviously predating de Jong's revisions), but is effectively just a reprinting of La Vallée Poussin's edition without La Vallée Poussin's extraordinarily erudite and helpful footnotes. Nonetheless, Vaidya can prove useful for his judgments regarding which of La Vallée Poussin's variants to adopt. The recent edition of Dwarikadas Shastri for the Bauddha Bharati series (1989) seems simply to reproduce Vaidya's edition, and takes no account of de Jong's revisions. The present translation, then, is from the edition of La Vallée Poussin as revised by de Jong (with de Jong's changes noted). The passage translated represents Candrakīrti's engagement with an interlocutor whom I would identify as Dignāga, and runs from 55.11 to 75.13 of La Vallée Poussin's edition (with references thus being to page and line numbers).

In my annotations to the translation, I have given the Sanskrit text, noting de Jong's proposed revisions as well as a few emendations of my own. Where I have found it useful to consult the Tibetan translation prepared by sPa-tshab nyi-ma-grags (as available in the Sakya College edition of 1993), I give the Tibetan as well. In addition, I have provided something of a commentary, briefly explaining the salient points particularly of more complex passages that are not discussed in Chapters 4 and 5. I have also indicated significant clues to the interlocutor's likely identity as Dignāga. In the footnotes, all references to "Hattori" are to Hattori 1968, and all references to "Siderits" are to Siderits 1981. Page numbers given in square brackets represent the page numbers of La Vallée Poussin's edition.

Translation

[p.55] [Objection:] At this point, some object: Is this certainty that existents are not produced based on a reliable warrant, or is it not based on a reliable warrant? In this regard, if it's accepted that it's based on a reliable warrant, then you have to explain: which warrants, having what characteristics and intending what objects? Are they sprung

from themselves, or from something else, or both, or altogether without cause? On the other hand, if [your certainty] is not based on a reliable warrant, this doesn't make sense, since understanding of a warrantable object depends upon reliable warrants[1] – for an uncomprehended object can't be comprehended without reliable warrants; hence, if there's no understanding of an object due to lack of reliable warrants, how is it a valid certainty? So it doesn't make sense to say existents are unproduced. Or again: It will be my [certainty] precisely that all existents exist, and that based upon the same thing as your certainty that existents are unproduced! And just as your certainty is that all things are unproduced, in exactly the same way, [p.56] my [certainty] will be that there is production of all things. Or [perhaps you will say] you have no certainty [to the effect that] "all existents are unproduced." In that case, since there's no persuading another of something of which one isn't oneself certain, it's pointless to undertake the treatise, and all existents stand unrefuted.[2]

[Response:] We reply: If we had anything at all like certainty, then there would be [a question of its being] based on a reliable warrant, or not based on a reliable warrant. But we don't! How so? If there were the possibility of doubt here, there could be a

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[1] With this point (*pramāṇādhinatvāt prameyādhigamasya*; Tib., *gzhal bya rtogs pa ni tshad ma la rag las pa'i phyir te*), Candrakirti clearly alludes to Dignāga, the very beginning of whose *Pramāṇasamuccaya* includes the claim that "understanding of a warrantable object depends upon reliable warrants" (in Kanakavarman's Tibetan, as given at Hattori p.175, *gaṅ gi phyir gṣal bya rtogs pa ni tshad ma la rag las pa yin*). Cf., Hattori's n.1.10, p.76; and n.11, below, for another citation of Dignāga's point.

[2] 55.11-56.3: *Atra kecit paricodayanti: Anutpannā bhāvā iti kim ayaṃ pramāṇajo niścaya uta-apramāṇajaḥ? Tatra, yadi pramāṇaja iṣyate, tadā-idaṃ vaktavyaṃ: kati pramāṇāni, kiṃlakṣaṇāni, kiṃviṣayāṇi, kiṃ svata utpannāni, kiṃ parata ubhayato 'hetuto vā-iti? Atha-apramāṇajaḥ sa na yuktaḥ, pramāṇādhinatvāt prameyādhigamasya. Anadhigato hy artho na vinā pramāṇair adhigantuṃ śakyata iti, pramāṇābhāvād arthādhigamābhāve sati, kuto 'yam samyagniścaya iti? Na yuktam etad* anutpannā [per Tibetan, de Jong] *bhāvā iti. Yato vā-ayam niścayo bhavato 'nutpannā bhāvā iti bhaviṣyati tata eva mama-api sarvabhāvāḥ santi-iti! Yathā ca-ayaṃ te niścayo 'nutpannāḥ sarvadharmā iti, tathā-eva* [p.56] *mama-api sarvabhāvotpattir bhaviṣyati. Atha te na-asti niścayo 'nutpannāḥ sarvabhāvā iti, tadā svayamaniścitasya parapratyāyanāsaṃbhavāc chāstrārambhavaiyarthyam eva-iti, santy apratiṣiddhāḥ sarvabhāvā iti.*

As noted in Chapter 4, the challenge with which this text thus begins is very much like that which begins Nāgārjuna's *Vigrahavyāvartani*, which begins: *Sarveṣāṃ bhāvānāṃ sarvatra na vidyate svabhāvaś cet, tvadvacanam asvabhāvaṃ na nivartayituṃ svabhāvam alam* ("If no existents whatsoever have any essence, then your words, being without essence, are not able to refute an essence!"). Interestingly, though, Candrakirti does not note the *VV*'s argument against this challenge until several pages into the text (cf., n.11, below).

certainty opposed to it and dependent upon it. But when we have no doubt in the first place, then how could there be a certainty opposed to it? For [such a certainty] would be independent of something else possessing the relation, as in the case of the longness or shortness of a donkey's horn. And when, in this way, there is no certainty, [p.57] then we will imagine reliable warrants for the sake of proving *what*? How, then, will they [i.e., reliable warrants] have number, characteristic, or object? Whether [their] production is intrinsic, dependent, both, or causeless – none of this has to be explained by us.[3]

[Objection:] If, as you say, you never have any certainty at all, then how is this expression of yours – which has the form of something ascertained, to wit, "neither intrinsically, nor extrinsically, nor through both, nor causelessly, do existents exist" – apprehended?

[Response:] This expression is ascertained by reasoning which is common-sensical only on the part of the world, not on the part of the venerable. Does this mean the venerable have no reasoning? Who can say whether or not they do? For ultimate truth is a matter of venerable silence. So how could [the venerable entertain any] conceptual elaboration that [would count as their having or not having] some argument in regard to it?[4]

[Objection:] Well, if the venerable do not expound reasoning, then how, here and now, will they awaken the world to ultimate truth?

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[3] 56.4-57.3: *Ucyate: Yadi kaścinniścayo nāma-asmākaṃ syāt, sa pramāṇajo vā syād apramāṇajo vā. Na tv asti. Kiṃ kāraṇaṃ? Iha-aniścayasaṃbhave sati, syāt tatpratipakṣas tadapekṣo niścayaḥ. Yadā tv aniścaya eva tāvad asmākaṃ na-asti, tadā kutas tadviruddho* [per Tibetan, de Jong] *niścayaḥ syāt? Saṃbandhyantaranirapekṣatvāt, kharaviṣāṇasya hrasvadirghatāvat. Yadā ca-evaṃ niścayasyā-* [p.57] *-bhāvaḥ, tadā kasya prasiddhyarthaṃ pramāṇāni parikalpayiṣyāmaḥ? Kuto vā eṣāṃ saṃkhyā lakṣaṇaṃ viṣayo vā bhaviṣyati? Svataḥ parata ubhayato ['hetuto] vā samutpattir iti sarvam etan na vaktavyam asmābhiḥ.*

Again, I noted in Chapter 4 that Candrakirti's response in terms of *niścaya* represents a point conceptually similar to Nāgārjuna's claim, in the *Vigrahavyāvartani*, to have no "thesis" (*pratijñā*).

[4] 57.4-8: *Yady evaṃ niścayo na-asti sarvataḥ, kathaṃ punar idaṃ niścitarūpaṃ vākyam upalabhyate bhavatāṃ? Na svato nāpi parato na dvābhyāṃ nāpy ahetuto bhāvā bhavantiti. Ucyate: Niścitam idaṃ vākyaṃ lokasya svaprasiddhayaivopapattyā, na aryāṇāṃ. Kiṃ khalv āryāṇām upapattir na-asti? Kena-etad uktam asti vā nāsti vā-iti? Paramārtho hy āryas tūṣṇibhāvaḥ* [emended per de Jong]. *Tataḥ kutas tatra prapañcasaṃbhavo yad upapattir anupapattir vā syāt?*

The venerable certainly do not expound reasoning according to business as usual. Rather, granting, for the sake of awakening others, only that reasoning which is well-established in the world, in that way they awaken the world.[5] For example, those in the throes of lust, having perverse understanding, do not perceive the actual impurity of the body, and having imputed an unreal aspect of beauty, [they] suffer. For the sake of the eradication of their lust, a manifestation of the Tathāgata or a god would describe in detail the defects of the body, which were previously concealed by the idea of beauty. [They will describe these, for example,] by way of such points as there being hairs on this body. And those [who had been lustful], based on the abandonment of that idea of beauty, would attain aversion. [p.58] So, too, in this world: through the condition of the sight which is judgment being afflicted by the eye disease of ignorance,[6] ordinary people suffer excessively, having erroneously imputed some particular sort of essence to existents – [an essence] whose nature is never being perceived by the venerable.

Now the venerable awaken them to [all this] through reasoning which is familiar to them [i.e., to ordinary beings]. For example, it's [generally] granted that there is no production of an existent jar from the clay and so forth; thus, because what *exists* already exists prior to production, it would be determined that there is no production. Or, for

[5] There might seem to be a contradiction here; for why is the latter (i.e., the venerables' causing the world to understand "having accepted that reasoning which is well-established in the world") *not* a case of their propounding something "according to business as usual"? Just what, in other words, is the difference between doing something "according to business as usual," and doing it "having accepted what is well-established in the world"? Siderits (pp.125-126) comments: "Here we must note the extreme care which Candrakirti takes to avoid the suggestion that the āryas seek to prove the ultimate truth. When they set out to ... instruct the world through the manipulation of the conventionally accepted epistemic practices, what they construct is not a proof but rather what would be considered by the world to be a well-established proof. The qualification is crucial, for if the Mādhyamika is said simply to prove the ultimate truth, there is the implication that he is in possession of ultimate means of proof, that is, that he is in possession of a theory of pramāṇas which he knows to be unconditionally valid."

There is, however, a more straightforward way to explain this. Thus, what's really negated (i.e., by the sentence *na khalv āryā lokasaṃvyavahāreṇa-upapattiṃ varṇayanti*) is not the *lokasaṃvyavahāreṇa* part, but the *upapattiṃ varṇayanti*. That is, the logicians can be said to take the approach according to which the problem with *lokavyavahāra* is that it's simply not sufficiently refined in its arguments, and that we can advance beyond that by making *better arguments* (but of a *kind* fundamentally similar to those met with in *lokavyavahāra*) – whereas Candrakirti's point is that the venerable do not rest their experience on *arguments* of this sort, they do not claim to *demonstrate* anything about the ultimate truth; rather, they simply leave "business as usual" behind altogether.

[6] Cf., p.261.4, where precisely the same expression is used.

example, it's accepted that a sprout is not produced from the coals of a fire, which are other than it; in this way, it could be ascertained that [production] is not from the seeds and so forth, either, which are intended.[7]

[Objection:] Then again, [the Epistemologist] could [rejoin that] "this is our experience."[8]

[Response:] This doesn't make sense, either, since this experience is false, [simply] *because* it's experience – like the experience of two moons on the part of someone with cataracts. Therefore, by virtue of the fact that experience similarly requires proof, this objection doesn't make sense.

"Therefore, existents are not produced" – thus, first of all, does the first chapter [of Nāgārjuna's *Mūlamadhyamakakārikā*] begin by countering the imputation of a false nature. Now the remainder of the treatise is undertaken for the sake of refuting whatever characteristics are imputed anywhere. Dependent origination does not have any irreducible (*niravaśeṣa*) property, not even such as goer, destination, or motion – [this treatise is undertaken] for the sake of proving [this].[9]

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[7] I.e., which are what the proponent of this account of causation intended to allow to stand; but these cannot be allowed, either, because they're just as "different" from the sprout as coals are, as discussed in Chapter 4.

57.9-58.6: *Yadi hy āryā upapattiṃ na varṇayanti kena khalv idāniṃ paramārthaṃ lokaṃ bodhayiṣyanti? Na khalv āryā lokasaṃvyavahāreṇopapattiṃ varṇayanti. Kiṃ tu lokata eva yā prasiddhopapattis tāṃ parāvabodhārtham abhyupetya tathaiva lokaṃ bodhayanti. Yathaiva hi vidyamānām api śarīrāśucitāṃ viparyāsānugatā rāgiṇo nopalabhante śubhākāraṃ ca abhūtam adhyāropya parikliśyante. Teṣāṃ vairāgyārthaṃ tathāgatanirmito devo vā śubhasaṃjñayā prāk pracchāditān kāyadoṣān upavarṇayet. Santy asminkāye keśā [ityā]dinā. Te ca tasyāḥ śubhasaṃjñāyā* <u>*vigamād*</u> [per de Jong] *vairāgyam āsāda-* [p.58] *-yeyuḥ. Evam ihāpy āryaiḥ sarvathāpy anupalabhyamānātmakaṃ bhāvānām avidyātimiropahatamatinayanatayā viparītaṃ svabhāvam adhyāropya kva cicca kaṃ cidviśeṣam atitarāṃ parikliśyanti pṛthagjanāḥ. Tān idānim āryās tatprasiddhayaivopapattyā paribodhayanti. Yathā vidyamānasya ghaṭasya na mṛdādibhya utpāda ity abhyupetam, evam utpādāt pūrvaṃ vidyamānasya vidyamānatvān, na asty utpāda ity avasīyatāṃ. Yathā ca parabhūtebhyo jvālāṅgārādibhyo 'ṅkurasyotpattir na astity abhyupetam, evaṃ vivakṣitebebhyo 'pi bījādibhyo na astity avasīyatam.*

[8] I.e., surely we all just *see* that things are produced from other things.

[9] 58.7-13: *Athāpi syād anubhava eṣo 'smākam iti. Etad apy ayuktaṃ. Yasmād anubhava eṣa mṛṣā, anubhavatvāt. Taimirikadvicandrādyanubhavavad iti. Tataś ca anubhavasyāpi sādhyasamatvāt tena pratyavasthānaṃ na yuktam iti. Tasmād anutpannā bhāvā ity; evaṃ tāvad viparītasvarūpādhyāropapratipakṣeṇa prathamaprakaraṇārambhaḥ. Idāniṃ kva cid yaḥ kaścid viśeṣo 'dhyāropitas tadviśeṣāpākaraṇārthaṃ śeṣaprakaraṇārambhaḥ. Gantṛgantavyagamanādiko 'pi niravaśeṣo viśeṣo nāsti pratītyasamutpādasyeti pratipādanārthaṃ.*

[Objection:] Or perhaps [the Epistemologist will suggest:] "It is [simply] worldly convention (*vyavahāra*) regarding warrants and warrantable objects which has been explained by us through [our school's] treatise."

[Response:] Then it should be stated what the fruit of [your] explanation of this [i.e., of worldly usage] is.

[The Epistemologist continues:] It [i.e., worldly usage] has been destroyed by bad logicians (*kutārkikaiḥ*), through their predication (*abhidhāna*) of false characteristics. [p.59] Its correct characteristics have been explained by us.

[Response:] If [this is said, we rejoin:] This doesn't make sense, either. For if, based on the composition of a false definition by bad logicians, *everyone* made a mistake regarding what's under definition (*kṛtaṃ lakṣyavaiparityaṃ lokasya syāt*), [then] the point of this [i.e., of your proposed alternative to Nyāya epistemology] would be one whose effort was fruitful. But it's not so, and this effort is pointless.[10]

Moreover, if comprehension of warrantable objects is dependent upon reliable warrants, [then] by what are these reliable warrants delineated? This fault is shown

[10] 58.14-59.3: *Atha syād eṣa eva pramāṇaprameyavyavahāro laukiko 'smābhiḥ śāstreṇānuvarṇita iti. Tadanuvarṇasya tarhi phalaṃ vācyaṃ. Kutārkikaiḥ sa nāśito viparitalakṣaṇā-* [p.59] *-bhidhānena. Tasya asmābhiḥ samyaglakṣaṇam uktam iti cet. Etad apy ayuktaṃ. Yadi hi kutārkikair viparitalakṣaṇapraṇayanaṃ* [according to the Tibetan available to La Vallée Poussin, *brjod pas*, =Skt. *praṇayanāt*...; adopted by Vaidya, though my Tibetan edition reads *brjod par*; I translate based on Vaidya] *kṛtaṃ lakṣyavaiparityaṃ lokasya syāt. Tadarthaṃ prayatnasāphalyaṃ syāt. Na ca etad evam iti vyartha evāyaṃ prayatna iti.*

It is with respect to this passage that the anonymous author of the **Lakṣaṇaṭikā* (cf., Yonezawa 1999, 2001) specifically identifies Dignāga as Candrakirti's interlocutor: "He says that on this view, it makes sense only [to speak of] the worldly convention regarding warrants and warrantable objects, not [what is] ultimate[ly the case]. [This is what is said in the passage] beginning '*Atha*....' ['Its correct characteristics have been explained] by us' means by Dignāga, et al. It is the master [i.e., Candrakirti] who says, at this point, 'the fruit of this intention should be explained,' and it is Dignāga who rejoins, '[It has been destroyed] by bad logicians.' 'It' [here] means convention." (*Lakṣaṇaṭikā* 2b4: *laukika eva pramāṇaprameyavyavahāro yukto na pāramārthika ity asmin pakṣe āha / athetyādi / asmābhi<r> Dignāgādibhiḥ / tadanubandhanasya <<pha>>laṃ vācyam ityatrāryaḥ, kutārkkikair iti Dignāgaḥ, sa iti vyavahāraḥ*). This very brief commentary on the *Prasannapadā*, Yonezawa speculates (2001: 27), was probably written under the supervision of Abhayākaragupta, which would place it in roughly the 12th century. (Thanks to Yoshiyasu Yonezawa for sharing this fragment with me.)

(*vihita*) in [Nāgārjuna's] *Vigrahavyāvartani*. Since you still haven't refuted this (*tadaparihārāt*), there's no illumination of the correct definition [by you].[11]

And if you say there are [only] two reliable warrants, corresponding respectively to the two [kinds of warrantable objects, i.e.,] bare particulars and abstractions,[12] [then we are entitled to ask,] does the subject (*lakṣya*) which has these two characteristics exist?[13] Or does it not exist? If it exists, then there is an additional warrantable object; how, then, are there [only] two reliable warrants? Or perhaps [you will say] the subject [which is characterized by these characteristics] does not exist. In that case, the characteristic, being without a locus, doesn't exist either, [and] how, [in this case,] are there [as many as] two reliable warrants? As [Nāgārjuna] will say [in *MMK* 5.4]: "When a characteristic is not operating, a subject to be characterized doesn't stand to reason; and given the unreasonableness of a subject to be characterized, there is no possibility of a characteristic, either."[14]

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[11] Alluding again to Dignāga's claim that *pramāṇādinaḥ prameyādhigamaḥ* (with the Tibetan here matching the Tibetan translation of Dignāga: *gzhal bya rtogs pa tshad ma la rag las pa yi*; cf., n.1, above), Candrakirti here finally refers to the main argument against this from the *Vigrahavyāvārtani* – specifically, the argument at *Vigrahavyāvartani* 31-33: *yadi pramāṇatas te teṣāṃ teṣāṃ prasiddhir arthānām, teṣāṃ punaḥ prasiddhiṃ brūhi kathaṃ te pramāṇānām. Anyair yadi pramāṇaiḥ pramāṇasiddhir bhavet tadanavasthā, nādeḥ siddhis tatrāsti naiva adhyasya nāntasya*. It is interesting, though, that while Candrakirti clearly endorses the argument, he does not elaborate on it, instead merely noting that it has not yet been met by his opponent. Here, he has other fish to fry (specifically relating, I think, to the "two truths" as entailing the critique he instead elaborates).

[12] I render *svalakṣaṇa* as "unique" or "bare particular" when it is Dignāga's usage that is in play, for reasons explained in Chapter 4; I render *sāmānyalakṣaṇa* as "abstraction" (rather than more customarily as "universal"). The category of *sāmānyalakṣaṇa* would, to be sure, include such examples of universals as "sets" and (if such were ever explicitly raised in the Indian context) "propositions." It is also meant, however, to include items such as *saṃtānas*, mental "continua" – cases, that is, such as later exponents like Mokṣākaragupta will characterize as *vertical*, as contra horizontal, *sāmānyalakṣaṇas*. This usage, it seems to me, is without parallel in the Medieval scholastic context in which the word "universal" is particularly grounded.

[13] This could also be rendered: "... is that which has these two characteristics a *lakṣya*, or not?"; or, taking *lakṣya* more literally as a gerundive, "is that which has these to be characterized, or not?" On these readings, though, the effect of Candrakirti's point remains substantially the same.

[14] 59.4-11: *Api ca, yadi pramāṇādhinaḥ prameyādhigamas tāni pramāṇāni kena paricchidyanta ityādinā Vigrahavyāvartanyāṃ vihito doṣaḥ. Tadaparihārāt samyaglakṣaṇadyotakatvam api nāsti. Kiṃ ca yadi svasāmānyalakṣaṇadvayānurodhena pramāṇadvayam uktaṃ, yasya tallakṣaṇadvayaṃ kiṃ tallakṣyam* [per de Jong; so, too, Vaidya] *asti? Atha nāsti? Yady asti, tadā tadaparaṃ prameyam astiti, kathaṃ pramāṇadvayaṃ? Atha nāsti lakṣyaṃ, tadā lakṣaṇam api nirāśrayaṃ nāstiti kathaṃ pramāṇadvayaṃ? Vakṣyati hi: "lakṣaṇāsaṃpravṛttau ca na lakṣyam upapadyate, lakṣyasya anupapattau ca lakṣaṇasyāpy asaṃbhavaḥ," iti.*

Candrakirti's commentary on *MMK* 5.4 verse is on pp.131-2 of La Vallée Poussin's edition, but,

[p.60] [Objection:] Or this could be said: It is not that characteristic means "that by which [something] is characterized." Rather, [following Pāṇini's rule at III.3.113, i.e.,] "*kṛtyalyuṭo bahulam*" ["the gerundive affix is variously applicable"], taking the affix in the sense of an object (*karmaṇi*), characteristic means "what is characterized."

[Reply:] Even so, this same fault [still obtains], since that instrument by which something [i.e., some *object*] is characterized has the quality of being a thing other than an object (*yena tal lakṣyate tasya karaṇasya karmaṇo 'rthāntaratvāt*), owing to the impossibility of something's being characterized by itself (*tenaiva tasya lakṣyamāṇatvāsaṃbhavād*).[15]

[The Epistemologist rejoins:] Well, perhaps this could be said: Because awareness is an instrument, and because this [i.e., awareness] is included in [our concept of] the bare particular, there is not the fault [with which you charge us].

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given the prominence of his discussion in chapter 1, there's surprisingly little there. There are, however, many other passages relevant to the critique of *svalakṣaṇas* in Candrakīrti's *Madhyamakāvatāra*. Cf., e.g., 6.22-36, which ends with a pair of verses specifically contra Dignāga's view of *svalakṣaṇas*: *gal te rang gi mtshan nyid brten 'gyur na / de la skur pas dngos po 'jig pa'i phyir / stong nyid dngos po 'jig pa'i rgyur 'gyur na / de ni rigs med de phyir dngos yod min* (6.34; La Vallée Poussin 1970b: 117: "If [an entity exists] in dependence on a *svalakṣaṇa*, then through negation of that the entity would be destroyed, and emptiness would be the cause of its destruction [i.e., if "emptiness" were taken as negating really existent *svalakṣaṇas*, then it would be a nihilistic doctrine]. This is not the case, however, because entities do no [intrinsically] exist."); *gang phyir dngos po 'di dag rnam dpyad na / de nyid bdag can dngos las tshu rol tu / gnas rnyed ma yin de phyir 'jig rten gyi / tha snyad bden la rnam bar dpyad mi bya* (6.35, p.120: "When the entities [taken for granted in the context of everyday experience] are examined, they are found to have no *svalakṣaṇa* other than the mark of the reality [expressed in the truth of the highest meaning]. Therefore the conventional truth of everyday experience is not to be critically examined." (cf., Huntington's n.54, p.235) Finally, 6.36 (p.123): *de'i phyir rang gi mtshan nyid kyi skye ba ni bden pa gnyis char du yang yod pa ma yin no* ("Therefore, from the point of view of either of the two truths, there is no production of particulars"). The latter point (i.e., that this sense of *svalakṣaṇas* does not obtain from the point of view of *either* of the two truths) neatly expresses Candrakīrti's contention that Dignāga's account of our epistemic practices is not even *conventionally* valid.

[15] 60.1-3: *Atha syān na lakṣyate 'neneti lakṣaṇam. Kiṃ tarhi "kṛtyalyuṭo bahulam" iti karmaṇi lyuṭaṃ kṛtvā lakṣyate tad iti lakṣaṇam. Evam api tenaiva tasya* [per de Jong, Tibetan] *lakṣyamāṇatvāsaṃbhavād – yena tallakṣyate* [per de Jong, Tibetan] *tasya karaṇasya karmaṇo 'rthāntaratvāt – sa eva doṣaḥ.*

Candrakīrti's claim is the eminently grammatical claim that the *instrument* by which something is effected (in this case, by which something is "characterized") is, by virtue of its *being* an instrument, something which cannot also be an *object*.

[Reply:] Here [in the world], that which is the nature of existents, [i.e.,] their own, not shared with anything else, that is their defining characteristic (*svalakṣaṇa*). For example, earth's [defining characteristic] is resistance, [the defining characteristic] of feeling is experience, [and the defining characteristic] of awareness is a particular conception of an object; for [in each of these cases,] by that [quality the thing in question] is characterized.[16] By one who, disregarding (*avadhūya*) the usage which follows the familiar sense based on this (*iti kṛtvā*), [instead] accepts [the word *svalakṣaṇa*] as denoting an object (*karmasādhanam*),[17] and positing [at the same time] the instrumental nature of perceptual awareness, it is said [in effect] that one bare particular has the quality of being an object, and *another* bare particular has the quality of being an instrument. [p.61] In this case, if the bare particular which is perceptual awareness is an instrument, then it must have a separate object (*tasya vyatiriktena karmaṇā bhavitavyam*).[18] *This* is the fault (in your position).[19]

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[16] Cf., Chapter 4, n.63, for the relevant references to the *Abhidharmakośa* (from which these examples are drawn), and to *Madhyamakāvatāra* 6.202-3 (where Candrakīrti trots out a similarly Ābhidharmika list of "defining characteristics" of all five *skandhas*).

[17] The Tibetan translation renders this as *las su sgrub pa*, "established as an object." For the sense of *-sādhana* as "denoting" or "expressive of," I follow Apte, p.1666, meaning #4. On the compound *karmasādhana*, see also Renou (1942), p.125, who gives: "qui a l'objet-transitif (i.e. une notion passive) pour mode de réalisation." We could easily follow this lead and transpose this discussion into the key of grammatical terms (hence, e.g., "denoting an *accusative*"), with little change in significance.

[18] Here, note the use of the gerund *bhavitavyam* to indicate something like the mode of necessity (cf., Chapter 4, n.98). This *bhāve prayoga* construction is missed by Siderits, who instead translates "But then if the consciousness svalakṣaṇa is the instrumental, *it should be by means of a distinct accusative of that*, just this is the defect" (p.134; my emphasis). This translation leads him to suppose there is a problem understanding the antecedent of the final pronoun ("of that"), which he then spends a couple of pages explaining. On my reading, though, the point is straightforward.

[19] 60.4-61.2: *Atha syāt: Jñānasya karaṇatvāt, tasya ca svalakṣaṇāntarbhāvād, ayam adoṣa iti. Ucyate: Iha bhāvānām anyāsādhāraṇam ātmiyaṃ yat svarūpaṃ, tat svalakṣaṇam. Tadyathā pṛthivyāḥ kāṭinyaṃ, vedanāyā anubhavo* [per de Jong, Tibetan], *vijñānasya viṣayaprativijñaptiḥ. Tena hi tal lakṣyata iti kṛtvā, prasiddhyanugatām* [per de Jong, Tibetan] *ca vyutpattim avadhūya karmasādhanam abhyupagacchati. Vijñānasya ca karaṇabhāvaṃ pratipadyamānena-idam uktaṃ* [per de Jong, Tibetan] *bhavati, svalakṣaṇasyaiva karmatā, svalakṣaṇāntarasya karaṇabhā-* [p.61] *vaśceti. Tatra yadi vijñānasvalakṣaṇaṃ karaṇaṃ, tasya vyatiriktena karmaṇā bhavitavyam iti sa eva doṣaḥ.*

Though conceptually fairly straightforward, particularly the latter part of this section is grammatically tricky, and I have found it helpful to consult the Tibetan here, with particularly the underlined portions making the passage more clear: *ci ste shes pa byed ba yin pa'i phyir la / de yang rang gi mtshan nyid kyi khongs su 'du ba'i phyir nyes pa 'di med do snyam na bshad par bya ste / re zhig 'dir ji ltar des de mtshon par byed 'di sa'i sra ba dang / tshor ba'i myongs ba dang / rnam par shes pa'i yul so sor rnam par rig pa ltar bdag nyid kyi rang gi ngo bo gzhan dang thun mong ma yin pa gang yin pa de ni rang gi mtshan nyid yin na / rab tu grags pa dang rjes su 'brel pa'i bye brag tu bshad pa bor nas / las su*

[The Epistemologist suggests another tack:] Perhaps it could be this way: That which is grasped by awareness, such as the resistance and so forth which are understood as [characterizing] the earth and so forth, that [i.e., the characterizing features to be grasped by awareness] just is the object of that [i.e., of awareness], and is said to be not distinct from the bare particular.[20]

[Reply:] If that is so, then, since the bare particular which is perceptual awareness lacks the quality of being an object [i.e., of awareness], then it could not be warrantable, since *only* a bare particular which has the form of an object can be warranted.[21] Thus, since you have specified (*ity etad viśeṣya*) that what is warrantable is twofold, [i.e., consisting in] bare particulars and abstractions, you're now forced to say (*vaktavyam*; Tib., *brjod par bya dgos so*)[22]: that bare particular which is designated as what characterizes, is warrantable; while that one designated as that *by which* it is

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sgrub pa khas len zhing rnam par shes pa byed pa'i ngo bor rtogs pas ni / rang gi mtshan nyid kho na las nyid yin zhing rang gi mtshan nyid gzhan ni byed pa'i ngo bo yin no zhes bya ba 'di smras par 'gyur ro /.

Sheldon Pollock (personal communication) suggests an interesting emendation here: *abhyupagacchati* (at 60.7) may be a locative present participle – in which case, *pratipadyamānena* (at 60.8) should be emended to *pratipadyamāne*, i.e., giving two locative absolute constructions. This fits particularly well with de Jong's change of "*ity uktam*" to "*idam uktam*," and would give: "*When*, disregarding the usage which follows the familiar sense, one accepts the definition [of *svalakṣaṇa* as an object], and *when* one [at the same time] accepts the instrumentality of *vijñāna*, (then) this is said:...." Such an emendation would be warranted by the otherwise unaccounted for *ca*'s (*prasiddhānugatāṃ ca... vijñānasya ca...*). The Tibetan seems to confirm that these *ca*'s do not function, e.g., to talk about two separate things (*prasiddyanugatām* and *vyutpattim*) in the first phrase, with *prasiddhyanugatāṃ* instead modifying *vyutpatti* (as reflected in de Jong's emendation from *prasiddhānugatāṃ*). Instead, the *ca*'s coordinate two whole phrases. Against Pollock's proposal, however, the Tibetan doesn't confirm the locative absolute, instead preserving the instrumental. Still, this comes to much the same thing, although it is perhaps said a bit less elegantly than on Pollock's proposal.

[20] I.e., the Epistemologist here suggests that perhaps *svalakṣaṇa* as "defining characteristic" is the *same thing* as *svalakṣaṇa* as "bare particular," so that, e.g., if we speak of the earth's "resistance" as its defining characteristic, we can do so because there is a corresponding "bare particular" which we perceive. The proposal, in other words, is that the thing commonly adduced as "earth's *svalakṣaṇa*" (i.e., hardness) in fact has an *ontological correlate*, in the form of the Epistemologist's "bare particular." This passage thus suggests the suitability of understanding Candrakirti's interlocutor here as effectively proposing (à la Michael Loux, as noted in Chapter 4, n.70) that the (Aristotelian) "notion of an essence just is the notion of the ontological correlate of a definition."

[21] Here, Candrakirti rejoins that the move explained in the previous note will no longer allow us to accommodate the conventional usage, according to which there is a "defining characteristic" (*svalakṣaṇa*) of *vijñāna*; for if, instead, we read this conventional expression as meaning "*the bare particular which is vijñāna*," then this is tantamount to saying that the *subjective* cognitive act of awareness must also be an *object* of some *other* such act, insofar as Dignāga's usage takes the word as *karmasādhanam* ("denoting an object").

[22] Again, note the use of the gerundive to connote a sense of necessity.

characterized, is *not* warrantable. [Perhaps you will say that] that one, too, denotes an object (*karmasādhana*). In that case, then it must have some *other* instrument.[23] And given this conception of the nature of an instrument on the part of *another* [moment of] awareness, undesired faults ensue.[24]

Perhaps you think there exists [the faculty of] apperception. Hence, [you maintain that], given that [awareness's] being an object obtains due to [its] apprehension by apperception, [awareness] is included among warrantable objects.[25] To this we respond: based on an extensive refutation of apperception in the *Madhyamakāvatāra*,[26] it doesn't make sense to say a bare particular [p.62] is characterized by *another* bare particular, and *that one* through apperception. Moreover, this last [sort of] awareness [i.e., the one called *svasaṃvitti*] doesn't exist at all, since there is no possibility of the functioning of a characteristic without a locus, [i.e.,] when there is no subject to be characterized, since it can't come to be as a result of [its] non-establishment by a separate bare particular. How, then, can apperception exist?[27]

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[23] *tadā tasyānyena karaṇena bhavitavyaṃ*; again, another usage of the gerundive to connote necessity. Siderits again misses the sense of the *bhāva prayoga* construction, instead giving "If the means of action [the cognition] is just that [the svalakṣaṇa], then *it should come to be by means of another instrumental* of that [cognition]..." (p.136; my emphasis) Again, as reflected in my translation, the third case here (*karaṇena*) indicates not an "instrument," but the *subject* of the verb *bhavitavyam*, i.e., the thing which must (despite the interlocutor's view to the contrary) exist "on the part of that" (*tasya*). Such constructions are clearly expressed in the Tibetan, which handles them without use of the gerundive: *de'i tshe de la byed pa gzhan zhig <u>yod par bya dgos</u> la....*

[24] 61.3-9: *Atha syāt: Yat pṛthivyādigataṃ kāṭhinyādikaṃ vijñānagamyaṃ, tat tasya karmāstyeva, tacca svalakṣaṇāvyatiriktam iti. Evaṃ tarhi vijñānasvalakṣaṇasya karmatvābhāvāt, prameyatvaṃ na syāt, karmarūpasyaiva svalakṣaṇasya prameytvāt. Tataśca dvividhaṃ prameyaṃ svalakṣaṇaṃ sāmānyalakṣaṇaṃ ca. Ityetadviśeṣya vaktavyaṃ: Kiṃcit svalakṣaṇaṃ prameyaṃ yallakṣyata ityevaṃ vyapadiśyate, kiṃcid aprameyaṃ yallakṣyate 'neneti vyapadiśyata iti. Atha tadapi karmasādhanaṃ; tadā tasyānyena karaṇena bhavitavyaṃ. Jñānāntarasya karaṇabhāvaparikalpanāyām <u>anistā dosāś</u>* [per de Jong, Tibetan] *ca-āpadyate.*

[25] I.e., given that an instrumental awareness is *apperceived*, it is also an *object*, i.e., of the "apperceiving" subject.

[26] Cf., *Madhyamakāvatāra* 6.72-78.

[27] 61.10-62.3: *Atha manyase svasaṃvittir asti. Tataḥ svasaṃvittyā grahaṇāt karmatāyāṃ satyām astyeva prameyāntarbhāva iti. Ucyate: vistareṇa Madhyamakāvatāre svasaṃvittiniṣedhāt, svalakṣaṇaṃ* [p.62] *svalakṣaṇāntareṇa lakṣyate tad api svasaṃvittyā iti na yujyate. Api ca, tad api nāma jñānaṃ svalakṣaṇavyatirekeṇāsiddher asaṃbhavāl lakṣyābhāve nirāśrayalakṣaṇapravṛttyasaṃbhavāt sarvathā nāstiti kutaḥ svasaṃvittiḥ?*

And thus [it says] in the *Venerable Questions of Ratnacūḍa [Sūtra]*: "Not seeing thought, he [i.e., the bodhisattva] investigates the stream of thought [as to] whence it has its arising. Its [arising] is thus: Thought arises when there is a intentional object (*ālambana*). Is it, then, [the case that] the intentional object is one thing, and the thought another? Or is that which is the intentional object precisely the [same as] the thought? If, first of all, the intentional object is one thing and the thought another, then there will be the state of divided thought (*dvicittatā*). Or if the intentional object itself is the thought, then how does thought perceive thought? But thought does not perceive thought. Just as a sword-edge cannot be cut by that same sword-edge, [p.63] and a finger-tip cannot be touched by that same finger-tip, in just the same way, a [moment of] thought cannot be seen by that same thought. For one who is in this way properly trained (*tasya evaṃ yoniśaḥ prayuktasya*; Tib., *de 'di ltar tshul bzhin rab tu sbyor ba la*), thought has the quality of not abiding (*anavasthānatā*), the quality of being neither severed nor eternal (*ucchedāśāśvatatā*), of not being the paramount self (*na kūṭasthatā*), of not being causeless, nor of being negated (*viruddha*) by conditions, neither from this nor from that, neither this nor that – [the bodhisattva] thus knows that stream of thought which [has all of these qualities], that creeping vine of thought (*cittalatām*), that reality (*dharmatā*) of thought, that unlocatedness of thought, that immovability of thought, that unseen-ness of thought, that essential nature (*svalakṣaṇatām*) of thought; thus does [he] see [this] as suchness (*tathatā*), and [he] does not cause it to be concealed. Thus does [he] realize this analysis of thought, thus does [he] see. This, son of noble family, is the bodhisattva's establishment of mindfulness, with respect to thought, by investigating thought."

Thus, there is no [faculty of] apperception; [and] since it is non-existent, what is characterized by what?[28]

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[28] 62.4-63.8: *Tathā ca-uktam āryaratnacūḍaparipṛcchāyāṃ: Sa cittam asamanupaśyan, cittadhārāṃ paryeṣate: kutaścit tasya utpattiriti? Tasyaivaṃ bhavati. Ālambane sati, cittam utpadyate. Tatkim anyadālambanam anyaccittaṃ, atha yad evālambanaṃ tadeva cittaṃ? Yadi tāvad anyad ālambanam anyaccittaṃ, tadā dvicittatā bhaviṣyati. Atha yadevālambanaṃ tadeva cittaṃ, tatkathaṃ cittaṃ* [per de

Moreover, would it be a characteristic by virtue of its *difference* from the subject to be characterized, or by virtue of non-difference? In this regard, first of all, if it's by virtue of difference, then even the characteristic, since it would be distinct from the subject to be characterized, couldn't be a characteristic, as though it were not a characteristic [at all]. And since it would be distinct from the characteristic, not even the subject to be characterized could be a subject to be characterized, as though it were not a subject to be characterized [at all]. [p.64] In this way, since it would be distinct from the subject to be characterized, the characteristic would have a subject-to-be-characterized with no need for a characteristic, and hence, since it would have no need for a characteristic, it could not be a subject to be characterized! [It would, then, be] just like a sky-flower, [which is an utterly non-existent thing which does not stand in need of characterization].

On the other hand, if subject-to-be-characterized and characteristic were not distinct, then, since it would not be separated from the characteristic, [it would] be as though [the subject] were itself the characteristic, and the subject's status as a subject (*lakṣyatā*) is given up. And since it would not be separated from the subject to be

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Jong, *Śikṣāsamuccaya* 235] *cittaṃ samanupaśyati? Na ca cittaṃ cittaṃ samanupaśyati. Tadyathāpi nāma tayā-evāsidhārayā saivāsidhārā na* [p.63] *śakyate chettuṃ. Na tenaivāṅgulyagreṇa tadevāṅgulyagraṃ śakyate spraṣṭuṃ. Evam eva na tenaiva cittena tadeva cittaṃ śakyaṃ draṣṭuṃ. Tasyaivaṃ yoniśaḥ prayuktasya yā cittasyānavasthānatā-anucchedāśāśvatatā na kūṭasthatā nāhetuki na pratyayaviruddhā na tato nānyato na saiva nānyā, tāṃ cittadhārāṃ cittalatāṃ cittadharmatāṃ cittānavasthitatāṃ cittāpracāratāṃ cittādṛśyatāṃ cittasvalakṣaṇatāṃ, tathā jānāti tathā paśyati yathā tathatāṃ na ca virodhayati* [per de Jong]. *Tāṃ ca cittavivekatāṃ tathā prajānāti tathā paśyati. Iyaṃ kulaputra [bodhisattvasya*; per Tibetan*] citte cittānupaśyanā smṛtyupasthānamiti. Tadevaṃ nāsti svasaṃvittis, tadabhāvāt kiṃ kena lakṣyate?*

Stcherbatsky (p.153, n.6) – who follows Burnouf's reading, noted by La Vallée Poussin, n.4 – is puzzled by *asamanupaśyan*, and emends to *cittam samanupaśyan*. But the Tibetan (*yang dag par rjes su ma mthong bas*) suggests that La Vallée Poussin's reading is correct. Siderits (who follows Vaidya's edition) translates: "How does the arising of consciousness, *not perceiving* what possesses consciousness, investigate the stream of consciousness?" (p.137, my emphasis) Thus, he correctly reads *asamanupaśyan*, but mistakes the subject. But the problem vanishes if we consult the *Śikṣāsamuccaya*, which quotes precisely this passage (in the Bibliotheca Buddhica edition of Bendall, p.235; cited by de Jong). That the text given by La Vallée Poussin is correct is suggested by what there precedes the present quote: "Examining thought he does not see it as internal, he sees it not outside him, nor in the conformations, nor in the elements, nor in the organs of sense. *Not seeing thought*, he follows the course of thought, asking, 'Whence does thought arise?'...." The point, then, is that, after prior investigations, he ("the bodhisattva") has failed to find anything answering to the designation "thought," and it is this failure which impels the present search into the nature of the "stream of thought."

characterized, even the characteristic would not be one whose essence was that of a characteristic, [but rather,] as though it were itself the subject. As it is said [in the *Lokātītastava*, verse 11]: "If the characteristic were different from the subject to be characterized, then the subject to be characterized would be without characteristic; [and] it is clearly admitted by you that, if there is no difference [between them], then neither one exists." And with respect to establishment of subject and characteristic, there is no other way without identity (*tattva*) or difference. Thus, [Nāgārjuna] will say [in *MMK* 2.21]: "How can there be establishment of these two whose establishment is neither through identity nor through difference?"[29]

Alternatively, if it is said that there will be establishment [of *lakṣya* and *lakṣaṇa*] by way of ineffability (*avācyatā*), [we respond that] it is not so.[30] For ineffability, by definition (*nāma*), obtains [only] when there is no recognition (*parijñānam*) of the mutual classification of terms; and where there is no recognition of [such mutual] classification, there, given the impossibility of specifying, according to the difference [between them]

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[29] 63.9-64.9: *Kiṃ ca, bhedena vā tallakṣaṇaṃ lakṣyāt syād, abhedena vā? Tatra yadi tāvad bhedena, tadā lakṣyād bhinnatvād, alakṣaṇaval lakṣaṇam api na lakṣaṇaṃ. Lakṣaṇāc ca bhinnatvād, alakṣyaval lakṣyam api na* [p.64] *lakṣyaṃ. Tathā lakṣyād bhinnatvāl, lakṣaṇasya lakṣaṇanirapekṣaṃ lakṣyaṃ syāt; tataśca na tallakṣyaṃ, lakṣaṇanirapekṣatvāt, khapuṣpavat. Athābhinne lakṣyalakṣaṇe, tadā lakṣaṇād avyatiriktatvāl lakṣaṇasvātmavad vihīyate lakṣyasya lakṣyatā. Lakṣyāc ca avyatiriktatvāl lakṣyasvātmaval lakṣaṇamapi na lakṣaṇasvabhāvaṃ. Yathā ca-uktaṃ: "Lakṣyāl lakṣaṇam anyac cet, syāttallakṣyam alakṣaṇaṃ; tayor abhāvo 'nanyatve vispaṣṭaṃ* [emend to *viṣpaṣṭaṃ*] *kathitaṃ tvayā" iti. Na ca vinā tattvānyatvena lakṣyalakṣaṇasiddhāv anyā gatir asti. Tathā ca vakṣyati: "Ekībhāvena vā siddhir nānābhāvena vā yayoḥ, na vidyate; tayoḥ siddhiḥ kathaṃ nu khalu vidyate" iti.* [MMK 2.21] For the text of the *Lokātītastava*, cf., Lindtner 1987: 132.

This passage, it seems to me, represents what is not only a characteristically Mādhyamika display of linguistic pyrotechnics, but one that is characteristically Sanskritic, in general. (For insightful reflections on the extent to which Sanskritic philosophy is motivated by grammatical and linguistic categories, see Ingalls 1954.) While this type of argument is likely to strike the non-Sanskritic reader as rather underwhelming, it should be remembered that Candrakīrti's overriding concern here is with how words are conventionally used, and that this all represents an eminently conventional sort of discourse. It seems to me that the conceptual force of this particular passage is much the same as that of his opening rejoinder (i.e., at 59.7-9; n.14, above).

[30] Here, Candrakīrti seems to refer to Dignāga's characterization of *svalakṣaṇas* as "indefinable" (*avyapadeśya*), "unutterable" (*anabhilāpya*), etc. (cf., Chapter 2, nn.37-39). Candrakīrti introduces this move as specifically meant to explain how there could, in fact, be some way, other than by "identity" and "non-identity" (*ekībhāvena* or *nānābhāvena*), of establishing how the *lakṣaṇa* and *lakṣya* of his *svalakṣaṇa* might be related.

(*viśeṣatas*), "this is the characteristic, this is the subject," there is complete absence of these two, as well. Therefore, there is no establishment by ineffability, either.[31]

Moreover, if awareness is the instrument with respect to determination of an object, what is the agent? For without an agent, there is no [p.65] possibility of instruments and so forth, just as in [the case of] the action of cutting [wood].

Then [perhaps] it is imagined that in this case, thought (*citta*) has the quality of agency. But this doesn't make sense, either, since, [on your own theory,] the function of thought is nothing more than apprehension an object;[32] apprehension of the particulars (*viśeṣa*) of an object [is the function] of [other] derivative mental operations (*caitasa*) – this based on acceptance [of the authoritative treatise which says that] "in this regard,, apprehension of an object is perceptual awareness, but derivative mental operations [are what pertains] with respect to its particulars."[33]

For when one principal action (*pradhānakriyā*) is to be accomplished, instruments and so forth possess their instrumentality and so forth because of the acceptance of their being subordinate (*aṅgibhāva*), by virtue of [their] respectively (*yathāsvam*) performing (*nivṛtti*) subordinate actions (*guṇakriyā*). But here, awareness (*jñāna*) and perceptual awareness (*vijñāna*) do not have one principal function [in common]. Rather, the

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[31] 64.10-13: <u>*Atha-avācyatayā*</u> [per de Jong, Tibetan] *siddhir bhaviṣyatiti cen, na etad evaṃ. Avācyatā hi nāma parasparavibhāgaparijñānābhāve sati bhavati. Yatra ca vibhāgaparijñānaṃ na-asti, tatra "idaṃ lakṣaṇam, idaṃ lakṣyam" iti viśeṣataḥ paricchedāsaṃbhave sati dvayor apy abhāva eva-iti. Tasmād avācyatayā-api na-asti siddhiḥ.*

[32] *arthamātradarśana*; i.e., perception devoid of *kalpanā*.

[33] The "authoritative treatise" thus quoted is *Madhyāntavibhāga* 1.8 (for the text of which – faithfully reproduced by Candrakirti –, cf., Anacker 1998: 426). Here, Candrakirti clearly alludes to Dignāga's recurrent point that the distinguishing of separate *viśeṣa* and *viśeṣya* ("characteristic" and "thing characterized") is a constitutively *conceptual* operation – in which case, perception can never itself register such a distinction. Cf., e.g., *Pramāṇasamuccaya* 1.23, as noted in Chapter 2, n.51. In regard to the way the categories in play here all line up, La Vallée Poussin (p.65, n.3) offers many useful textual citations (starting with the *Nyāyabinduṭikā*); he summarizes: "Soient les équivalences: *cittam = vijñānam = nirvikalpakajñānam = arthamātragrāhi; caitasāḥ = jñānam = savikalpakajñānam = arthaviśeṣagrāhi.*" See also Hall 1983 (p.84, n.1), who aptly notes that the Ābhidharmikas *vijñāna* basically corresponds to what Dignāga calls *pratyakṣa*, while the Ābhidharmikas' *saṃjñā* corresponds to *anumāna*. Candrakirti here bears out Hall's observation, effectively attributing to his interlocutor a usage according to which *vijñāna=pratyakṣa*. This is further clarified in the immediately following passage.

principal function of perceptual awareness is determination of a mere object, while that of awareness is determination of its particulars (*viśeṣa*); hence, awareness does not have any instrumentality, nor does thought have any agency. This, then, is the fault.[34]

[Objection:] Well, perhaps it could be that, since scripture says "all dharmas are without self," there is no existence of an agent anywhere; and yet, even without an agent, there is communicative activity using verbs and so on.

[Response:] This isn't the case, either; for you have incorrectly ascertained the meaning of tradition. This is explained in the *Madhyamkāvatāra*.[35]

[p.66] [Objection:] Well, perhaps this could be [suggested]: Even when there is no possibility of characteristics apart from a "body" or a "head" – as [in expressions such as] "the body of a statue,"[36] or "the head of Rāhu" –, there is, [in such cases, nevertheless] a relation of characteristic and thing-to-be-characterized; just as [in that

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[34] 64.14-65.8: *Api ca, yadi jñānaṃ karaṇaṃ viṣayasya paricchede, kaḥ kartā? Na ca kartāram antareṇāsti* [p.65] *karaṇādināṃ saṃbhavaḥ chidikriyāyām iva. Atha cittasya tatra kartṛtvaṃ parikalpyate; tad api na yuktaṃ, yasmād arthamātradarśanaṃ cittasya vyāpāro, 'rthaviśeṣa[darśanaṃ] caitasānāṃ. "Tatra-arthadṛṣṭir vijñānaṃ, tadviśeṣe tu caitasāḥ" ity abhyupagmāt. Ekasyāṃ hi pradhānakriyāyāṃ sādhyāyāṃ yathāsvaṃ guṇakriyānirvṛttidvāreṇa-aṅgibhāvopagamāt* [de Jong: *aṅgabhāvopagamāt*] *karaṇādināṃ karaṇāditvaṃ. Na ca-iha jñānavijñānayor ekā pradhānakriyā, kiṃ tarhy arthamātraparicchittir vijñānasya pradhānakriyā, jñānasya tv arthaviśeṣaparicchedа; iti nāsti jñānasya karaṇatvaṃ, nāpi cittasya kartṛtvaṃ. Tataś ca sa eva doṣaḥ.*

Again, note (with Ingalls 1954) the extent to which Candrakīrti's argument here follows standard grammatical analyses of the roles played by various parts of speech.

[35] 65.9-11: *Atha syāt, anātmānaḥ sarvadharmā ity āgamāt, kartuḥ sarvathābhāvāt, kartāram antareṇāpi vidyata eva kriyādivyavahāra iti. Etad api nāsti, āgamasya samyagarthānavadhāraṇāt. Etac coktaṃ* [per de Jong, Tibetan] *Madhyamkāvatāre.*

Stcherbatsky (p.157, n.8) cites *Madhyamakāvatāra* 6.68, ff., but I don't see how the passages he cites relate to the discussion at hand. For Siderits's commentary on this passage, see n.41, below.

[36] The primary sense of *śilāputraka* is typically "millstone" or "pestle," which is reflected in the Tibetan translation (*mchi gu*). If we take it that way, it seems to me the point would differ slightly from the point of the other example; the point would perhaps be that, insofar as the word involves a semantic unit that ordinarily refers to persons (i.e., *putra*, such that the word's *nirukti* makes it mean something like "stone boy"), one might be inclined to suppose that the *body* of such is, like the body of a person, *animate* – hence, the force of the subsequent part where we're told that the *ākāṅkṣā* that goes with this word is *buddhi*, "intellect." Thus, the reason a *śilāputraka just is* a body is that it is *inanimate* (whereas a statue would only *be* a "body" if it happened to be a headless statue). However, it seems to me preferable to follow Stcherbatsky (p.158) in reading this to mean "statue" – in which case, the point of the example is exactly the same as that of the "Rāhu's head" example; viz., both cases involve a genitive relation between two referents when there is in fact only one thing (i.e., a statue *just is* a body).

case], here, too, there will be [a real relation] even when there is no possibility of any earth apart from its *svalakṣaṇa*, [so that we can say,] "earth's *svalakṣaṇa*."[37]

[Reply:] It is not so, because [these cases] are not the same. For given that the words 'body' and 'head' function *(pravṛttau)* [only] in dependence upon other co-existent *(sahabhāvi)* categories like *(-vat)* intellect and so forth, and hands and so forth, the arising of a conception *(buddhy-upajanana)* which has as its antecedent condition merely the words 'body' or 'head,' is *(vartate)* precisely one which needs *(sākāṅkṣa)* the other, accompanying categories. [Hence, such a conception will be accompanied by the thoughts,] whose body? whose head? Another [person], with a desire to ignore *(nirācikirṣayā)* the connection with the other characteristics, removes the expectation of [his] interlocutor by the suggestion *(dhvanin)* of the characteristics of statues and Rāhu, which [suggestion] is in conformity *(anuvidhāyin)* with mundane convention *(saṃketa)*. This makes sense. But here, given the impossibility of earth and so forth apart from resistance and so forth, the relation of characteristic and thing-to-be-characterized doesn't make sense.[38]

If [it is countered that], because of the acceptance by non-Buddhists of separate subjects *(lakṣya)*, in accordance with that, [our] definition of characteristic is without fault, [p.67] [we reply,] it is not so; for it is not suitable to accept, with regard to your own occasion *(svasamaye)*, the categories imagined by non-Buddhists, which are devoid

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[37] Cf., Chapter 4, n.76, on my decision to leave *svalakṣaṇa* untranslated here (contra Siderits's contention that "the opponent has reverted to the traditional usage of 'svalakṣaṇa'"). Cf., also, *Madhyamakāvatāra* 6.143.

[38] 66.1-8: *Athāpi syāt: Yathā śilāputrakasya śariraṃ rāhoḥ śira iti, śariraśirovyatiriktaviśeṣaṇāsaṃbhave 'pi, viśeṣaṇaviśeṣyabhāvo 'sti. Evaṃ pṛthivyāḥ svalakṣaṇam iti, svalakṣaṇavyatiriktapṛthivyasaṃbhave 'pi, bhaviṣyatiti. Naitad evam, atulyatvāt. Śariraśiraḥśabdayor hi buddhyādipāṇyādivatsahabhāvipadārthāntarasāpekṣatāpravṛttau, śariraśiraḥśabdamātrālambano buddhyupajananaḥ sahacāripadārthāntarasākāṅkṣa eva vartate. Kasya śariraṃ, kasya śira iti? Itaro 'pi viśeṣanāntarasaṃbandhanirācikirṣayā* [per de Jong] *śilāputrakarāhuviśeṣaṇadhvaninā laukikasaṃketānuvidyāyinā pratipattuḥ* [per de Jong] *kāṅkṣām upahantiti* [per de Jong] *yuktaṃ. Iha tu kāṭhinyādivyatiriktapṛthivyādyasaṃbhave sati na yukto viśeṣaṇaviśeṣyabhāḥ.*

of arguments (*yuktividhura*), since you would have to admit [their] additional [list of what count as] reliable warrants, and so forth, too.[39]

Moreover, because of the real existence of the characteristic of appropriator (*upādātṛ*) on the part of the statue, which has as its appropriated substratum (*upādāna*) a body – [a characteristic] which is familiar without analysis, included in ordinary transactions – and [also] because of the real existence of [the characteristic of] appropriator on the part of Rāhu, who has as appropriated substratum a head – [because of the real existence of these,] just as [in the case of] derivatively [existent entities] such as the person, this example doesn't make sense.[40]

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[39] Of course, this is an unwanted consequence only for Candrakirti's interlocutor, since Candrakirti himself will, in fact, end by endorsing (as conventionally valid, at least) the Naiyāyika list of *pramāṇas*; cf., 75.6-8, below.

[40] 66.9-67.3: *Tirthikair vyatiriktalakṣyābhyupagamāt, tadanurodhena viśeṣaṇābhidhānamaduṣṭamiti cet,* [p.67] *na etad evaṃ; na hi tirthikaparikalpitā yuktividhurāḥ padārthāḥ svasamaye 'bhyupagantuṃ nyāyyāḥ, pramāṇāntarāder apy abhyupagamaprasaṅgāt. Api ca pudgalādiprajñaptivat, saśariropādānasya śilāputrakasyopādātur laukikavyavahārāṅgabhūtasya viśeṣaṇasya-avicāraprasiddhasya sadbhāvāt, śira-upādānasya ca rāhor upādātuḥ sadbhāvād, ayuktam etan nidarśanaṃ.*

Note that the Tibetan makes the last sentence more clear, first translating all of the genitives, and *then* concluding: *gzhan yang lus kyi rten can khyad par byed pa 'jig rten pa'i tha snyad kyi yan lag tu gyur pa ma brtags na grub pa rten pa po mchi gu dang / mgo'i rten can brten pa po sgra gcan ni gang zag la sogs par brtags pa ltar yod pa'i phyir dpe 'di rigs pa ma yin no*. This makes clear that, among other things, *sadbhāva* is supposed to construe with *pudgalādiprajñapti*, too. Thus, Candrakirti is here saying that, in the case of statues and Rāhu, *as in the case of pudgalādiprajñapti* (but as *not* in the case of "earth" and so forth, i.e., of things whose *svalakṣaṇas* are at stake), there is some reality to their existing for pre-reflective, worldly discourse (*laukikavyavahārāṅgabhūtasya avicāraprasiddhasya*); specifically, for pre-reflective, worldly discourse (but not, of course, *paramārthatas*), there are specifiable *upādānāḥ* and *upādātaraḥ*, such as make the genitive relationship intelligible, just there are specifiable *upādānāḥ* and *upādātaraḥ* in the case of nominal entities such as persons. The case of *pudgalādiprajñapti*, then, is the same as the case of Rāhu and of statues, inasmuch as *neither* case is the same as the "resistance of earth" case.

This is all worth noting since Stcherbatsky seems to read 67.3 (*api ca pudgalādiprajñaptivat*...) as introducing a further objection from Candrakirti's interlocutor. Thus, he attributes this passage to "The Logician," and translates, "But is not our example of a merely verbal relation just the same as the generally admitted among Buddhists fact of the nominal personal identity (in every individual's life)?" (p.159) Sprung, apparently following suit, translates, "Perhaps it is like pragmatically useful and tenable ideas (*prajñaptivat*) such as the individual person (*pudgala*)? This analogy is not apposite." (Sprung 1979: 58) As Sprung's translation indicates (and as we will see shortly), Candrakirti is going to conclude by saying that a certain example does not make sense. However, because both Stcherbatsky and Sprung take the phrase beginning *api ca pudgalādiprajñaptivat* to represent a question from the interlocutor, they conclude that it is *this* example which Candrakirti thinks is not reasonable. This is misleading. For, as the phrase *api ca* ("moreover") ought to tell us, this phrase in fact begins a further amplification of *Candrakirti's* point – i.e., his point regarding the unreasonableness of the example of "Rāhu's head" and "a statue's body." Thus, he is giving us a further reason for taking *this* example to be unsuited to Dignāga's task (i.e., that of attempting to show how *svalakṣaṇa* can mean "bare particular," and still be used in phrases such as "hardness is the *svalakṣaṇa* of earth"); and his point is that the case of *pudgalādiprajñaptayaḥ is precisely like* that of "Rāhu's head," etc. The point, then, is that the case of *pudgalādiprajñaptayaḥ* illustrates the reason why it is (conventionally) valid to use a phrase such as "Rāhu's head," while it can yet remain invalid to think that this case could warrant any conventional use of the expression "earth's bare particular." (Presumably, what made it difficult to see that this is how *pudgalādiprajñaptivat* is being deployed is the

If it is [suggested that], in fact, the example *is* established, since, because of the non-establishment of any other object apart from the body and the head, there is perception of merely those [i.e., simply of body and head], [we reply that] it is not so, because such critical analysis (*itthaṃvicāra*) doesn't operate in ordinary communication, and because the existence of ordinary categories is not based on such critical analysis. For just as a self, critically considered, is impossible as [something] separate from form and so forth, but nonetheless, according to mundane convention (*lokasaṃvṛtyā*), it exists (*asya astitvam*), relative to the aggregates (*skandhān upādāya*),[41] – so, too, with respect to Rāhu and the statue; hence, there is no establishment of the example.

In the same way, even if, on the part of earth and so forth, there is no subject (*lakṣyaṃ*) [when] being considered apart from resistance and so forth, and [even if the] characteristic, as separate from the subject, is without a locus, nevertheless, it exists

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fact that this phrase comes so early in the passage, making it seem almost like the *subject* of the sentence, rather than a comparison.)

[41] Note that Siderits translates this passage "but by worldly convention there is the reality of that, *not* depending on the skandhas, just so ...." (p.144, my emphasis) – as though, presumably, the *skandhānupādāya* were to be construed as a compound: *skandha-anupādāya*. As I showed in Chapter 4, though, there are ample resources for rightly reading *skandhān upādāya* – with *skandha* in the accusative plural as the object of the gerund *upādāya*.

Note that Siderits elsewhere seems to exploit this misreading to make a point that may not, after all, be what Candrakīrti intends; commenting on the interlocutor's erroneous appeal to the passage "all dharmas are without self" (n.35, above), Siderits explains: "Anātmavāda ["the doctrine of selflessness"] thus belongs on the side of paramārtha or absolute truth, for it is just the assertion that ontological commitment is a function of linguistic practice, and it is thus a higher-order characterization of saṃvṛti. If this is correct, however, then the epistemologist may not legitimately employ the anātman doctrine in defense of some feature of his analysis, for that analysis must proceed within the boundaries of those structures which govern our linguistic behavior, and anātmavāda is not among these. Indeed at the saṃvṛti level the anātman thesis is false, for conventional linguistic practice requires that the nominative be filled when we employ verbs of cognition." (141) I find Siderits's explanation attractive, and would prefer for it to be correct; for this would explain what is otherwise something rather difficult to account for. Unfortunately, however, this interpretation does not fit with what Candrakīrti's Sanskrit here clearly says, and so we are left with what is indeed the counterintuitive claim that "according to mundane convention" (*lokasaṃvṛtyā*), the self "exists [only] relative to the aggregates" (*skandhān upādāya-asya-astitvaṃ*) – when the more intuitive claim would (as Siderits rightly presumes) be that convention considers the self to exist, *simpliciter*. In fact, this difficulty is no doubt related to Candrakīrti's exceptional refusal to countenance even the *conventional* usage of the word *svabhāva*; and it is this refusal, perhaps above all else, which raises hermeneutical difficulties vis-à-vis Candrakīrti's notion of the two truths, since it would often seem that *svabhāva* is perhaps the notion that *most* significantly characterizes the conventional – in which case, Candrakīrti's claim always to defer to the conventional (e.g., n.41, below) becomes deeply problematic. (Cf., Chapter 4, n.87, where I raise this difficulty; and Chapter 5, n.45, on even the conventional sense of *svabhāva* being refused.)

conventionally – the master [i.e., Nāgārjuna] settled the proof by establishment [of all these categories] as simply being mutually interdependent.

And this is necessarily (*avaśyam*)[42] to be accepted in this way; for otherwise, the conventional [p.68] would not be free from reasoning[43]; [then] this would be *reality*, not the conventional. And it is not [the case that] there is the impossibility only of things like statues when they are investigated by reasoning. Rather, according to an argument which is going to be set forth [later on], there is no possibility of form and feelings and so forth [i.e., the *skandhas*, of which these are the first two], either; hence, their existence, too, like that of the statue, would have to be accepted as conventional. And this is not how [you accept them]; hence, [your position is] false.[44] This presentation of dependent indication is also extensively taught in the *Madhyamakāvatāra*, so that should be consulted, too.[45]

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[42] Note the use of this indeclinable to convey something like the mode of necessity.

[43] Cf., Apte, s.v., *vi-yuj*, #5: "To free or deliver from, deprive of (with instr.)." And the Tibetan: *kun rdzob 'thad pa dang ldan pa ma yin nam....*

[44] It should be noted that there is quite likely a textual problem here, and that I have made what seems to me the best sense of this conclusion by refusing an emendation proposed by La Vallée Poussin. Thus, La Vallée Poussin follows the Tibetan (*de dag kyang mchi gu la sogs pa bzhin du kun rdzob tu yod pa ma yin pa nyid du khas blangs par 'gyur na*) in suggesting the reading: *teṣām api saṃvṛtyā śilāputrakādivan nāstitvam ästheyaṃ syät, na ca-etad evam ity asad etat*. (Vaidya [1960: 23] adopts La Vallée Poussin's emendation. De Jong [1978] is silent on the point.) This would give us: "They, too, like statues and so forth, would have to be accepted as *not* existing conventionally." This is a possible reading, according to which Candrakirti's point would have be that even the *conventional* existence of such things would have to be disallowed *if it were thought that the conventional could be characterized by critical examination;* for what cannot be doubted, in any case, is that the *skandhas* fail to survive critical examination. The translation I have given, though, seems more straightforwardly to follow what precedes it, as Candrakirti's point is instead that the merely "conventional" existence of the *skandhas* is *precisely* what we have to accept – with this being stated counterfactually only insofar as it is a conclusion that he thinks his interlocutor will wish to avoid. (For a similar passage, see n.55, below.) This reading is warranted by all of the manuscripts available to La Vallée Poussin, which read *–putraka iva-astitvam āstheyam* – the reading I have adopted (given in the following note). I would venture that it is the optative here that gives pause; for it seems clear that the optative puts this counterfactually, but not immediately clear (given the characteristically laconic *na caitad evam ity asad etat* that follows) what is counterfactual about it. As MacDonald (2000: 166) notes, it is clear that the Tibetan translators of the *Prasannapadā* "were already aware of problems in the transmission," so that, while the Tibetan translation is often more reliable than the available Sanskrit manuscripts, it should not be judged infallible.

[45] 67.3-68.4: *Śarīraśirovyatiriktasya-arthāntarasya-asiddhes, tanmātrasya-upalambhāt, siddham eva nidarśanam iti cet, na etad evaṃ. Laukike vyavahāra itthaṃvicārāpravṛtter avicārataś ca laukikapadārthānām astitvāt. Yathaiva hi rūpādivyatirekeṇa vicāryamāṇa ātmā na saṃbhavati, api ca lokasaṃvṛtyā skandhān upādāya-asya-astitvaṃ, evaṃ rāhuśilāputrakayor apiti nāsti nidarśanasiddhiḥ. Evaṃ pṛthivyādīnāṃ yady api kāṭhinyādivyatiriktaṃ vicāryamāṇaṃ lakṣyaṃ nāsti, lakṣyavyatirekeṇa ca lakṣaṇaṃ nirāśrayaṃ, tathāpi saṃvṛtir eṣeti* [per de Jong] *parasparāpekṣāmātratayā* [per de Jong] *siddhyā siddhiṃ vyavasthāpayāṃbabhūvur ācāryāḥ. Avaśyaṃ caitad evam abhyupeyaṃ, anyathā hi saṃvṛtir upa-*

Perhaps [the Epistemologist] would [say, at this point:] What's the use of this hair-splitting? For we do not say that all transaction involving warrants and cognizables is true; rather, that [which is] familiar in the world is [all that is] established by this argument.

We respond: We, too, say, What's the use of this hair-splitting, which delves into mundane communication? Leave it alone! – until there is understanding of reality, the conventional, whose reality (*sattākā*) comes into being (*ātmabhāva*) as projected (*āsādita*) through mere error, is, for those desirous of liberation, the cause of the accumulation of the roots of merit which convey [one] to liberation. [p.69] But you, by virtue of an intellect which is ignorant of the distinction between conventional and ultimate truth, having introduced some argument, senselessly (*anyāyato*) destroy it.[46] It is I who, based on skill in settling conventional truth, having located myself in the worldly viewpoint, overturning one argument dedicated (*upakṣipta*) to the refutation (*nirākaraṇa*) of one part of the conventional by another argument, like an elder of the world, refute only you who are deviating from the conduct of the world; but [I do] not

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[p.68] *pattyā na viyujyeta, tadā-iyam* [per de Jong] *tattvam eva syān na saṃvṛtiḥ. Na ca upapattyā vicāryamāṇānāṃ śilāputrakādinām eva-asaṃbhavaḥ, kiṃ tarhi vakṣyamāṇayā yuktyā rūpavedanādinām api nāsti saṃbhava iti; teṣām api samvṛtyā śilāputrakādivan nāstitvam āstheyam syāt. Na caitad evam ity asad etat.*

Note that the last sentence in my translation here renders a sentence that does not occur in the available Sanskrit mss., but which is preserved in the Tibetan: *brten nas brtags par rnam par bzhag pa 'di yang dbu ma la 'jug ba las rgyas par bstan pas de nyid las yongs su btsal bar bya'o.* Notwithstanding my decision to ignore the Tibetan translation of the sentence immediately preceding this one (cf., the preceding note), there are good reasons to be generally confident in the Tibetan translation. As La Vallée Poussin notes regarding his edition, "L'édition a été établie d'après les MSS. de Paris, de Cambridge et de Calcutta, copies médiocres d'un original qui ne paraît pas avoir été irréprochable.... je n'ai pas hésité à considérer la version tibétaine comme plus digne de confiance que la traduction manuscrite...." Cf., De Jong 1949: x-xi, and MacDonald 2000. Moreover, Candrakirti refers us to the *Madhyamakāvatāra* throughout the *Prasannapadā*, so that the reference given here in the Tibetan is not at all out of place. Note that Tsong-kha-pa's *Legs-bshad-snying-po*, too, quotes this sentence as occurring in the *Prasannapadā*; cf., Thurman 1991: 295.

[46] I.e., destroy that very argument! Thus, *etāṃ* picks up *upapatti*, not *saṃvṛti*, and the point is that the problem is with Dignāga's *replacing* the conventional with something else (i.e., with a peculiarly technical account thereof, a putatively probative "*upapatti*"), but then still wanting to retain the view that this is *conventional*, and hence, ultimately superseded by the ultimate. The "senselessness" of this move, then, amounts to self-referential incoherence, as I argued in Chapter 5 (n.2).

[refute] the conventional.[47] Therefore, if it is everyday communication, then, as in the case of a characteristic, there must also be a subject [which possesses it] [i.e., there cannot be a *self-characterizing* characteristic], and hence, there is precisely this fault. Now [from the perspective of] ultimate truth, due to the [ultimate] unreality of subjects, the twofold characteristic [i.e., *sva-* and *sāmānyalakṣaṇa*] does not exist, either; whence, then, [your] two authoritative warrants?[48]

Now perhaps it is not accepted (*aṅgi-kriyate*) [by you] that the derivation (*vyutpatti*) of words thus depends on a connection between action and agent. This is extremely problematic. You transact your business (*vyavaharati*) by those very words whose sense (*pravṛtti*) is due to a connection between action and agent, and yet you do not acknowledge actions and instruments and so forth as [necessarily involved in] the meaning[s] of words. You fool! Your sense is bound (*pratibaddha*) to a mere fancy.[49]

And when, in this way, it is not settled that there are [only] two [kinds of] cognizable things, then, by virtue of the fact of their not having as objects either bare particulars or universals, tradition and so forth have the status of additional reliable

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[47] Except, of course, to the extent that "conventional" notions constitutively involve the presupposition of *svabhāva*! Cf., n.41, above.

[48] 68.5-69.7: *Atha syāt: Kim anayā sūkṣmekṣiyā? Naiva hi vayaṃ sarvapramāṇaprameyavyavahāraṃ satyam ityācakṣmahe, kiṃ tu lokaprasiddhir eṣāmunā nyāyena vyavasthāpyata iti. Ucyate: vayam apy evaṃ brūmaḥ: Kim anayā sūkṣmekṣiyā laukikavyavahāre 'vatārikayā? Tiṣṭhatu tāvad eṣā viparyāsamātrāsāditātmabhāvasattākā saṃvṛtir mumukṣūṇāṃ mokṣāvāhakakuśala-* [p.69] *mūlopacayahetur, yāvan na tattvādhigama iti. Bhavāṃs tv etāṃ saṃvṛtiparamārthasatyavibhāgadurvidagdhabuddhitayā kva cid upapattim avatārya-anyāyato nāśyati. So 'ham saṃvṛtisatyavyavasthāvaicakṣaṇyāl laukika eva pakṣe sthitvā, saṃvṛtyekadeśanirākaraṇopakṣiptopapattyantarāntaram* [emend to *upapattyantaram*] *upapattyantareṇa vinivartayan* <u>*lokam vrddha*</u> [emend to *lokavṛddha*] *iva lokācārāt paribhraśymānaṃ bhavantam eva nivartayāmi, na tu saṃvṛtiṃ. Tasmād yadi laukiko vyavahāras, tadā-avaśyaṃ lakṣaṇavallakṣyeṇāpi bhavitavyaṃ; tataś ca sa eva doṣaḥ. Atha paramārthas, tadā lakṣyābhāvāl lakṣaṇadvayam api nāstiti, kutaḥ pramāṇadvayaṃ?*

[49] 69.8-10: *Atha śabdānām evaṃ kriyākārakasaṃbandhapūrvikā vyutpattir nāṅgikriyate. Tad idam atikaṣṭaṃ. Tair eva kriyākārakasaṃbandhapravṛttaiḥ śabdair bhavān vyavaharati, śabdārthaṃ kriyākaraṇādikaṃ ca na-icchatiti. Aho bata-icchāmātrapratibaddha*<u>*pravṛttitā*</u> [per de Jong, Tibetan] *bhavataḥ.*

Note that here again, we have something like a transcendental argument in miniature, with Candrakīrti here urging that his interlocutor's own use of language has as a condition of its possibility the very features the interlocutor has been trying to refute.

warrants.[50] Moreover, because it doesn't include (*asaṃgraha*) instances of worldly discourse such as "a jar is perceptible," and because of the acceptance of the discourse of ordinary people (*anārya*), [your] definition (*lakṣaṇa*) is too narrow; it doesn't make sense.[51]

[p.70] [The epistemologist rejoins:] Perhaps it could be [like this:] Things like color, which are what is appropriated (*upādāna*) as jars, are perceptible [simply] because of [their] determinability by the reliable warrant which is perception. And thus, it's like the case where, having made figurative reference to the effect with respect to [what is really] the cause, it is taught that "the birth of buddhas is bliss"; in the same way, having made figurative reference to the cause with respect to [what is really] the effect, a jar, even though being occasioned by perceptibles like its color, is designated as perceptible.[52]

[Response: Appeal to] figurative usage does not make sense with respect to a cognitive object of this kind of. For in the world, birth is perceived as separate from happiness. Indeed, since [birth has as its] nature the characteristic of [being] compounded, which fact is the cause of many hundreds of evils, it [i.e., birth] is precisely *un*happiness. With respect to the sort of object where what is being taught – "it [i.e.,

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[50] Note that Candrakirti here approaches his concluding endorsement of the Naiyāyika *pramāṇas* as representing the best account of our conventional epistemic practices; cf., 75.6-8, below.

[51] 69.11-14: *Yadā ca-evaṃ prameyadvayam avyavasthitaṃ, tadā [sva]sāmānyalakṣaṇ[ā]viṣayatvena-āgamādināṃ pramāṇāntaratvaṃ. Kiṃ ca "ghaṭaḥ pratyakṣa" ityevam ādikasya laukikavyavahārasya-asaṃgrahād, anāryavyavahārābhyupagamāc ca, avyāpitā [emend to avyāptitā] lakṣaṇasya-iti na yuktam eta*

[52] Cf., Chapter 5, n.13, for other sources relevant to this discussion of *kārye kāraṇopacāram.* Note that Dignāga does, in fact, appeal to *upacāra* in his account of *pratyakṣa*. At least one of these appeals seems to be very much as Candrakirti here represents it: "The word *pratyakṣa* is used with respect to three things: the reliable warrant, the awareness [that results from the exercise of such a reliable warrant], and the object [of this awareness]. With respect to these, [the usage which designates] the reliable warrant is primary, and the others are secondary (*nye bar btags* =Skt. *aupacārika*). With regard to [the latter, e.g.,] an object is [figuratively] characterized as '*pratyakṣa*' since it is cognized by [the reliable warrant called] *pratyakṣa*." (*Pramāṇasamuccyavṛtti ad* 1.41c-d; Tibetan at Hattori, pp.233: *mṅon sum gyi sgra ni tshad mad daṅ śes pa daṅ yul gsum la ḥjug go. de la tshad ma la ni gtso bo yin la, gṣan dag la ni ñe bar btags pa yin te: de la yul la ni mṅon sum gyi gsal bya yin pahi phyir mṅon sum du btags pa yin no*; cf., the following note) Note that Dignāga also makes a different sort of appeal to *upacāra* – specifically, in the context of his finally being committed only to the reality of *svasaṃvitti* – on which, cf., Hattori, n.1.65, p.106.

birth] is happiness" – is incoherent (*asaṃbaddha*), figurative usage makes sense. But in the present case – "a jar is perceptible" – there is nothing at all called a jar which is imperceptible, [nothing at all] separately perceived (*pṛthagupalabdha*) of which perceptibility could be figuratively predicated.[53]

If it is said that perceptibility is figurative because of the non-existence of a jar apart from [perceptible qualities] such as color, then [appeal to] figurative usage makes even less sense, since there is absence of a basis which is being figuratively described;[54] for the sharpness of a donkey's horn is not spoken of [even] figuratively. Moreover, if it is imagined that a jar, which is included in worldly discourse, has [only] figurative perceptibility since it doesn't exist apart from its color and so forth, then surely, this being the case (*iti kṛtvā*), because color and so forth, too, do not exist apart from earth and so forth, the [merely] figurative perceptibility of that color and so forth would also have to be posited.[55]

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[53] 70.1-7: *Atha syāt: ghaṭopādānanīlādayaḥ pratyakṣāḥ, pratyakṣapramāṇaparicchedyatvāt* (Tib., *mngon sum gyi tshad mas yongs su gcad par bya ba yin pa'i phyir mngon sum yin te*; cf., the underlined portion of the Tibetan translation from Dignāga in the preceding note). *Tataś ca yathaiva kāraṇe kāryopacāraṃ kṛtvā, "buddhānāṃ sukha utpāda" iti vyapadiśyate, evaṃ pratyakṣanīlādinimittako 'pi ghaṭaḥ kārye kāraṇopacāraṃ kṛtvā pratyakṣa iti vyapadiśyate. Na evaṃ vidhe viṣaya upacāro yuktaḥ; utpādo hi loke sukhavyatirekeṇopalabdhaḥ. Sa ca saṃskṛtalakṣaṇasvabhāvatvād anekaduṣkaraśatahetutvād, asukha eva. Sa sukha iti vyapadiśyamāno 'saṃbaddha evety; evaṃvidhe viṣaye* [per de Jong, Tibetan] *yukta upacāraḥ. Ghaṭaḥ pratyakṣa ity atra tu, na hi ghaṭo nāma kaścid yo 'pratyakṣaḥ pṛthagupalabdho yasya-upacārāt pratyakṣatvaṃ syāt.*

The point is that recourse to *upacāra* requires that there be *two* referents (the thing figuratively described, and the thing appealed to so to describe it), with merely their *association* being incompatible with the primary meanings. Thus, if we are to say that a jar is only figuratively "perceptible," we must already know that there *is*, in fact, such a thing as a jar, and that it is simply not really *perceptible*, such that these two terms ("jar" and "perceptible") were (like *utpāda* and *sukha*) *asaṃbaddha*. But in fact, conventional usage attests the belief that jars *are* perceptible, so there is no obvious contradiction such as would require recourse to figurative explanation.

[54] Here, note that Sthiramati's *Triṃśikābhāṣya* seems to press precisely the same point against the Mādhyamikas, i.e., when Sthiramati urges that "conventional [reality] without some basis does not stand to reason" (*na hi saṃvṛtir nirupādāna yujyate*; cf., Chapter 4, n.79). Sthiramati's point is made in the context of a discussion of *upacāra*, and he bases this point about the necessity of a really existent *upādāna* ("basis") for the conventional on precisely the same point that Candrakīrti here makes about conditions for *upacāra*.

[55] This passage, it seems to me, provides some warrant for my reading of the problematic passage at 68.2-4; cf., n.44, above.

70.8-12: *Nīlādivyatiriktasya ghaṭasya-abhāvād aupacārikaṃ pratyakṣatvam iti cet, evam api sutarāṃ upacāro na yukta, upacaryamāṇasya-āśrayasya-abhāvāt; na hi kharaviṣāṇe* [emended per de Jong, Tibetan] *taikṣṇyam upacaryate. Api ca, lokavyavahārāṅgabhūto ghaṭo yadi nīlādivyatirikto nāstiti kṛtvā tasya-aupacārikaṃ pratyakṣatvaṃ parikalpyate, nanv evaṃ sati pṛthivyādivyatirekeṇa nīlādikam api nāstiti, nīlāder asya-aupacārikaṃ pratyakṣatvaṃ kalpyatām.*

As it is said [in Āryadeva's *Catuḥśataka*, chapter 14, verse 15]: [p.71] "Just as a pot does not exist as separate from its form and so forth, so, too, form does not exist as separate from wind and so forth [i.e., as separate from the elements]."[56] Therefore, because of the non-inclusion of such worldly usage by [your] definition, [your] definition has [the fault of] insufficient extension.[57] For the perceptibility of jars and so forth and of colors and so forth is not accepted from the point of view of one who knows reality (*tattvavidapekṣayā*); but by worldly convention, the perceptibility of jars and so forth is precisely to be accepted! As it is said in the [*Catuḥ*]*śataka*: "The whole jar, unseen, is present even when only its color is seen[58]; but what knower of reality would say that a jar is [ultimately] perceptible? By this same reasoning (*vicāreṇa*), sweet fragrance, melodious sound, softness – all [of these] are [similarly] to be denied by one possessed of supreme intellect."[59]

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[56] Cf., Lang 1986: 130.

[57] *avyāpitā*; that is, it doesn't cover all the usages that a successful definition would have to cover.

[58] As far as I can tell, previous translations of Āryadeva's passage seem to misread this *pada*. Specifically, none of the previous translations of this passage seems to be based in the recognition that *ghaṭo 'dṛṣṭo* is the subject of the verb! Thus, Lang (1986: 175) reads, "When only the color is perceived, the pot as a whole, of course, is not perceived." This reading seems to omit *jāyate* altogether. Tillemans, too, gives a translation which seems not to account for this: "when one sees the [visual] form, indeed, one will not see the whole vase." (p.175) Stcherbatsky (p.167) seems completely off base: "A transcendentalist will never say 'We see a patch of colour, not a jar,' Or a 'jar is present before us.'" Unless I am missing something, though, the Sanskrit seems to me fairly straightforwardly to read as I have translated it. I take the point to be that, conventionally, one speaks of the *whole jar* as "perceptible," even though it is of course technically true that one only really "perceives" various aspects of it. It is, nevertheless, said to be perceptible from the conventional perspective, and the contrast is thus with the perspective of a "knower of reality" (*tattvavid*) – that is, the perspective of a fully realized Buddha, who of course realizes that there is *nothing* that is *ultimately* "perceptible."

[59] 70.12-71.9: *Yathoktaṃ:* [p.71] *"Rūpādivyatirekeṇa yathā kumbho na vidyate, vāyvādivyatirekeṇa tathā rūpaṃ na vidyate" iti. Tasmād evam ādikasya lokavyavahārasya lakṣaṇena-asaṃgrahād,* <u>*avyāpitaiva*</u> *lakṣaṇasyeti. Tattvavidapekṣayā hi "pratyakṣatvaṃ ghaṭādināṃ nilādināṃ ca na-iṣyate"; lokasaṃvṛtyā tv abhyupagantavyam eva pratyakṣatvaṃ ghaṭādināṃ. Yathoktaṃ Śatake: "Sarva eva ghaṭo 'dṛṣṭo rūpe dṛṣṭe hi jāyate, brūyāt kas tattvavinnāma ghaṭaḥ pratyakṣa ity api? Etenaiva vicāreṇa sugandhi madhuraṃ mṛdu, pratiṣedhayitavyāni sarvāṇy uttamabuddhinā" iti.*

The reference is to *Catuḥśataka* 13.1-2 (Lang 1986: 118-9). This section begins Candrakīrti's critique of *pratyakṣa* as a privileged *pramāṇa*. Interestingly, Candrakīrti here cites only the *Catuḥśataka*; he does not cite his own *Catuḥśatakavṛtti*, which suggests – particularly since he hasn't hesitated to cite his *Madhyamakāvatāra* throughout the *Prasannapadā* – that he had not yet written it. In any case, for this whole section, cf., Candrakīrti's *Catuḥśatakavṛtti*, chapter 13, which is a key source for this argument against *pratyakṣa*; in Tillemans 1990, vol.1, pp.175-199 (trans.), and vol.2, pp.60-127 (Tibetan text, Sanskrit fragments); and especially p.277n, 287n.

Moreover, because of the fact that the word 'perception' is expressive of the meaning *not invisible* (*aparokṣa*), an object which is plainly before us is perceptible. By virtue of the fact that (*iti kṛtvā*) the sense organ has proceeded towards it (*asmin*), the perceptibility of non-invisible things such as jars and color and so forth becomes established. [p.72] Because an awareness which discerns those [e.g., jars, color, etc.] has a perceptible as its cause, as [in the case of] a straw- or chaff-fire [i.e., which are so-called because of having straw or chaff as cause of the fire], [such an awareness] is designated [as having] the quality of being a perception.[60] But the etymology of one who derives (*vyutpādayati*) the word 'perception' as [what] proceeds with respect to each *sense* [faculty] (*akṣam akṣaṃ prati vartate*) doesn't make sense, because of an awareness's not having as its object the *sense*, and because, [instead,] of having as its object an *object*.[61] [Following these etymological principles,] we would [counterfactually characterize the faculty that picks out perceptible objects like jars as] "occurring in connection with an object" (*prati-viṣayam*) or "occurring in connection with a referent" (*praty-artham*).[62]

[60] This is Candrakīrti's preferred etymology of the word *pratyakṣa* – i.e., taking the adjectival sense ("perceptible") as primary, and considering any epistemic faculty that picks out an object so characterized as, *ipso facto*, "perception." This is the move apropos of which Tillemans quite rightly says: "By shifting etymologies Candrakīrti tries to make perception banal: any consciousness, conceptual or not, caused by a perceptible (*pratyakṣa*) object will be termed *pratyakṣa*." (Cf., Chapter 5, n.19)

[61] According to Stcherbatsky (168, n.3), it is Praśastapāda whose etymology is here referred to. This is, however, incorrect, and Siderits (152-53) is quite right to point out that the etymology here considered and rejected is the one advanced in Dignāga's **Nyāyamukha*. (Siderits here follows Hattori, who gives Dignāga's Sanskrit at pp.76-77, n.1.11.) The present critique of Dignāga takes the form of a claim characteristic of such direct realists as the Mīmāṃsakas; cf., e.g., Śabara, who similarly says, "a perceptual cognition has a *thing* as its cognitive object, it does not have a *cognition* as its cognitive object" (*arthaviṣayā hi pratyakṣabuddhiḥ, na buddhiviṣayā*; quoted in Jha 1978: 26). This point is clearly also in play in Pārthasārathimiśra's lengthy consideration of the charge that he compromises the Mīmāṃsaka disavowal of awareness's "being self-illuminating," in which context Pārthasārathi accepts that awareness is "exhausted by the mere attainment of an object" (cf., Appendix I, n.34).

[62] 71.10-72.3: *Api ca-aparokṣārthavācitvāt pratyakṣaśabdasya, sākṣād abhimukho 'rthaḥ pratyakṣaḥ. Pratigatam akṣam asminn iti kṛtvā, ghaṭanīlādīnām aparokṣāṇāṃ pratyakṣatvaṃ siddhaṃ bhavati. Tatparicchedа-* [p.72] *kasya jñānasya tṛṇatuṣāgnivat pratyakṣakāraṇatvāt, pratyakṣatvaṃ vyapadiśyate. Yas tv akṣam akṣaṃ prati vartata iti pratyakṣaśabdaṃ vyutpādayati, tasya jñānasya-indriyāviṣayatvā[d viṣayaviṣayatvā]c ca na yuktā vyutpattiḥ. Prativiṣayaṃ tu syāt pratyartham iti vā.*

With this last point, Candrakīrti mockingly charges that Dignāga's own etymology doesn't serve his purposes; for insofar as Dignāga wants to designate the privileged epistemic faculty which "proceeds towards" (*prati vartate*) perceptibles, he would be better off etymologizing *viṣayaṃ viṣayaṃ prati vartate* – in which case, though, the faculty would be called *prativiṣaya*, not *pratyakṣa*.

[Objection:] Perhaps this could be [suggested]: Even given that the functioning of perceptual awareness (*vijñāna*) is dependent upon both [i.e., both sense faculty and object], it is based on conformity (*anuvidhānāt*) with the acuity (*paṭumandatā*, lit., "sharp-or-dull-ness") of the locus – i.e., because perceptual awarenesses have the quality of changing as that [i.e., the locus of the sense faculty) changes[63] – that there is designation [of the senses] precisely in terms of the *locus* of the senses, [as, for example, in the case of] ocular awareness (*cakṣurvijñāna*), [which is named for the eye][64]; in just the same way as this, even if it proceeds always towards an object, nevertheless, proceeding always in reliance upon the senses, the awareness is designated in terms of the basis [upon which it thus relies]; hence, it will be [called] 'perception' (*praty-akṣam*, "with respect to the senses"). For it is [commonly] seen [that there is] designation [of a thing] in terms of its specific cause (*asādhāraṇa*), [as, e.g., we speak of] the sound of a drum, the sprout of barley, [etc.] [i.e., even though there are also other causes operating to produce these effects].[65]

[Response:] This [i.e., the case of *pratyakṣa*] is not the same as the former[66]; for in that case, if perceptual awareness (*vijñāna*) were being defined in terms of its object – as, for example, "perceptual awareness *of form*," etc. – then the difference[s that obtain] on the part of the sixfold perceptual awareness could not be shown, since *mental*

[63] Literally, "because of awarenesses' being possessors of change when there is change of that..."

[64] The reference here is clearly to *Abhidharmakośabhāṣyam* 1.45 (Pradhan 1975: 34), which begins *tadvikāravikāritvād āśrayāś cakṣurādayaḥ* ("the loci [of the senses are] the eyes, etc., because of [awareness's] changing when there is change in those"). The *bhāṣya* (*Ibid.*) explains: *cakṣurādināṃ hi vikāreṇa tadvijñānānāṃ bhavaty anugrahopaghātapaṭumandatānuvidhānān na tu rūpādināṃ vikāreṇa tadvikāraḥ* ("for [change] arises on the part of awarenesses arising from [the senses], inasmuch as they are functioning or destroyed, sharper dull, etc., according to change on the part of the eyes and so forth; but change in that [i.e., awareness] is not according to change on the part of the *forms*, and so forth [i.e., the objects seen]").

[65] Here, it is a discussion in Dignāga's *Pramāṇasamuccaya* (1.4a-b) which is referred to. Hattori gives the Sanskrit of Dignāga's *kārikā* at p.87, n.1.32: *asādhāraṇahetutvād akṣais tad vyapadiśyate*. The *vṛtti* on this passage then proceeds to discuss precisely the examples here adduced by Candrakīrti (viz., those of the "sound of a drum" and "sprout of barley"). Hattori's translation of the *vṛtti* here is at p.26, and the Tibetan is at pp.179-181; cf., also, Hattori's n.1.33, p.87.

[66] That is, the example of *cakṣurivjñāna*'s being so called is not relevant to the case of *pratyakṣa*'s being so called, for reasons to be made clear presently.

awareness proceeds with respect to the very same object as *visual* awareness.[67] [p.73] That is to say, if the sixfold awareness of things such as color is [merely] called "perceptual awareness" (*vijñānam*), [*simpliciter*,] there arises a conception accompanied by an expectation, [to wit:] "is this a *perceptual awareness* produced by the senses that possess form, or perhaps (*āhosvit*) a [simply] *mental* [awareness]?" But when the specification is in terms of the locus [of the sense], even given the possibility that mental consciousness functions with respect to the objects of ocular and other such awarenesses, the difference between them is [nonetheless] established.[68]

But in this case [i.e., that of *pratyakṣa*],[69] if, with a desire to explain the definition of reliable warrants, it's accepted [by you] that the fact of being a perception belongs only to what is devoid of conception, [then] because it's desired [by you] that we distinguish that [i.e., perception] only (*eva*) from conception, no benefit whatsoever is seen in designation according to the special cause.[70] And given that the function and number of reliable warrants are dependent upon cognizables, and because of the

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[67] That is, the only reason for specifying the different *vijñānas* in terms of the various *indriyas* from which they arise, is to distinguish them from *manovijñāna* ("mental awareness"), since the latter cannot be distinguished in terms of its object insofar it has as *its* object the outputs of the other *vijñānas*, and hence, *their* objects.

[68] 72.4-73.3: *Atha syāt, yathobhayādhināyām api vijñānapravṛttāv, āśrayasya paṭumandatā-anuvidhānād vijñānānāṃ tadvikāravikāritvād, āśrayeṇaiva vyapadeśo bhavati, cakṣurvijñānam iti; evaṃ yady apy artham arthaṃ prati vartate, tathāpy akṣam akṣam āśritya vartamānaṃ vijñānam, āśrayeṇa vyapadeśāt; pratyakṣam iti bhaviṣyati. Dṛṣṭo hy asādhāraṇena vyapadeśo bheriśabdo yavāṅkura iti. Na etat pūrveṇa tulyaṃ. Tatra hi viṣayeṇa vijñāne vyapadiśyamāne, rūpavijñānam ityevamādinā, vijñānaṣaṭkasya bhedo na-upadarśitaḥ syāt, manovijñānasya cakṣurādivijñānaiḥ sahaika-* [p.73] *viṣayapravṛttatvāt. Tathā hi nilādivijñānaṣaṭke vijñānam ity ukte, sākāṃkṣa eva* <u>*pratyayo jāyate*</u> [per de Jong]: *"kiṃ etad rūpindriyajaṃ vijñānam, āhosvin mānasam?" iti. Āśrayeṇa tu vyapadeśe, manovijñānacakṣurādivijñānaviṣayapravṛttisaṃbhave 'pi, parasparabhedaḥ siddho bhavati*

[69] Here, the *iha* still relates to the previous paragraph's *na-etatpūrveṇa tulyam*; i.e., the *pūrvapakṣin* had wanted to say that *pratyakṣa* should be named in terms of its *āśraya* (i.e., the senses), just as the various *vijñānas* are. Candrakirti has responded that the cases aren't comparable, and has just explained why the *vijñānas* are designated as they are. Now, he's going to explain why *pratyakṣa* is designated as it is.

[70] Here, I read according to La Vallée Poussin's n.8, p.73, which indicates that the second *sati* in this sentence (i.e., p.73.5) is lacking in the Tibetan, and should be struck, so that the locative can be taken as a *viṣaye saptami*. The point is just that, given Dignāga's definition of *pratyakṣa*, all he should be interested in doing is being sure to advance a *nirukti* that excludes *kalpanā* – just as *cakṣurvijñāna* is so called only in order to distinguish it from *manovijñāna*. But taking *praty-akṣam* to refer to the *āśraya* does not advance that cause at all.

presentation (*vyavasthāpāt*) of the nature (*svarūpa*) of the two reliable warrants – whose reality is gained (*samāsādita*) by virtue of the fact simply of [their] following the forms of [the two kinds of] cognizables – specification in terms of the sense [faculties] does not help at all; hence, designation precisely by the object is always proper.[71]

If [the Epistemologist rejoins by saying,] "Since the word 'perception,' in the sense intended, is well known in the world, and since the word 'with respect to an object' (*pratyartha*) is not well known, we rely upon the basis of the word's etymology (*vyutpatti*) precisely in terms of the locus [of the sense faculty]"[72] – [p.74] [if this is said,] we respond: This word 'perception' is indeed well-known in the world; but it is described *by us* [and not by you] precisely as it is in the world. But if, with contempt (*tiraskāra*) for worldly categories as they are established, this derivation is being made, [then] there would also be contempt for the well-known word [i.e., '*pratyakṣa*'].[73] And based on that [i.e., based on disregarding the well-known sense of the word], what is [commonly] called 'perception' would not be such.

And there could not be, on the part of one visual awareness, which has its basis in one moment of sense faculty, the quality of being a perception, since there would be no

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[71] 73.4-8: *Iha tu pramāṇalakṣaṇavivakṣayā kalpanāpoḍhamātrasya pratyakṣatvābhyupagame sati, vikalpakād* [emend to *vikalpād*?] *eva tadviśeṣatvābhimatatvād asādhāraṇakāraṇena vyapadeśe sati*[strike this last *sati*, per La Vallée Poussin's n.8], *na kiṃ cit prayojanam upalakṣyate. Prameyaparatantrāyāṃ ca pramāṇasaṃkhyāpravṛttau, prameyākārānukāritāmātratayā ca samāsāditātmabhāvasattākayoḥ pramāṇayoḥ svarūpasya vyavasthāpanān, na-indriyeṇa vyapadeśaḥ kiṃ cid upakarotiti, sarvathā viṣayeṇaiva vyapadeśo nyāyyaḥ.*

Again, Candrakirti here makes a show of accepting, *ex hypothesi*, Dignāga's goals, noting that according to these one ought to want a *nirukti* that etymologizes *pratyakṣa* in terms of its *object*, since the whole point of the Epistemologist's account is that *pramāṇa* follows / corresponds to *prameya*. But of course, if Candrakirti wins this concession, then he's well on the way to advancing the trivialization of Dignāga's privileged epistemic faculty.

[72] Here, Candrakirti's interlocutor rejoins that, following *Candrakirti's* etymological principles, the epistemic faculty that picks out perceptibles ought to be called *pratyartham* – and since such is clearly not the case, it cannot be that the adjectival sense is conventionally primary.

[73] Candrakirti's response here has strong affinities with the method followed by J. L. Austin (1962) in his critique of A. J. Ayer – viz., that of arguing that one cannot use a well-known, ordinary word, but substitute for it a peculiarly technical sense, since it's then no longer the same thing that's under discussion. Cf., also, Chapter 5, n.28.

point in repetition (*vipsārthābhāvāt*)[74]; and if there is absence of the quality of being a perception on the part of one [moment], there would [such absence] on the part of many [instances of awareness, i.e., a *continuum*].[75]

And because you accept that only that awareness which is devoid of conception is perception; and since nobody's discourse is by way of that [kind of awareness][76]; and because of the desirability of explaining[77] worldly discourse with respect to reliable warrants and cognizables – [your] conception of the reliable warrant which is perception becomes (*saṃjāyate*) quite senseless.[78]

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[74] Here, Candrakīrti begins a new tack, one that again accepts, *ex hypothesi*, Dignāga's commitments – here, presumably, the Epistemologist's doctrine of *kṣaṇikatva* ("momentariness"), according to which *pratyakṣa*, like any cognitive event, would have to consist in atomic moments of sense-function. This, then, is the context for Candrakīrti's reference to the grammarians' device of *vipsa* (Tib., *zlos pa*), "repetition" – specifically (according to Apte, meaning #2), the notion of "Repetition of words to imply continuous or successive action." This is the device that is invoked in etymologizing *pratyakṣa* as *akṣam akṣaṃ prati vartate*, and Candrakīrti is pointing out that "repetition" (*akṣam akṣam*) implies a continuity or successiveness such as could not obtain given the Epistemologist's radical *kṣaṇikatva*. Thus, a single, atomic moment of (say) ocular perception could not warrant the grammarians' device of *vipsā*.

[75] This last point is then reminiscent of one of the fundamental points of Vasubandhu's critique of atoms in the *Viṃśatikā* (and, of course, of Dignāga's similar arguments from the *Ālambanaparīkṣā*): if a single, "atomic" moment of perceptual awareness does not make sense (i.e., insofar as it renders the repetition *akṣam akṣam* meaningless), then there's nothing out of which to build up a *succession* (or "continuum," *saṃtāna*) of sensory awarenesses, either. This is all put very elliptically, and the point, again, is simply to argue that Dignāga's proposed *vyutpatti* does not advance his own goals.

[76] As noted in Chapter 5 (nn.22-24), the *tena* here will admit of two readings: it can mean something like "thus" or "therefore," in which case what follows (*lokasya saṃvyavahārābhāvāt*) is intended counterfactually ("because *there would be* no meaningful discourse on the part of the world"); or it can refer back to *kalpanāpoḍhajñāna*, in which case it simply says there is no meaningful discourse in the world *of the sort that makes use of this conception*. The latter reading is greatly to be preferred as a reading of the Sanskrit, though I might still opt to get some mileage out of the former, more tendentious reading (which is, in any case, one that still fits with Candrakīrti's point), insofar as it lends itself to my reconstruction of Candrakīrti's as transcendental arguments.

[77] *vyākhyātum iṣṭatvāt*. This could be read in a couple of ways – it could be taken *normatively* (i.e., as reflected in the translation I have given here), or it could simply be stating Dignāga's own avowed interests (in which case, we might render, "since *you* desire to explain...").

[78] 73.9-74.8: *Loke pratyakṣaśabdasya prasiddhatvād, vivakṣite 'rthe pratyarthaśabdasya-apratisiddhatvād, āśrayeṇaiva* [p.74] *vyutpattir āśriyata iti cet, ucyate: asty ayaṃ pratyakṣaśabdo lokaprasiddhaḥ* [per de Jong]. *Sa tu yathā loke, tathāsmābhir ucyata eva. Yathāsthitalaukikapadārthatiraskāreṇa tu tadvyutpāde kriyamāṇe, prasiddhaśabdatiraskāro 'pi syāt* [per de Jong, Tibetan], *tataś ca pratyakṣam ityevaṃ [na] syāt, ekasya ca cakṣurvijñānasya-ekendriyakṣaṇāśrayasya pratyakṣatvaṃ na syād vipsārthābhāvāt* (Tib., *zlos pa'i don med pa'i phyir*) *ekaikasya ca pratyakṣatvābhāve, bahūnām api na syāt. Kalpanāpoḍhasyaiva ca jñānasya pratyakṣatvābhyupagamāt, tena ca lokasya saṃvyavahārābhāvāt, laukikasya ca pramāṇaprameyavyavahārasya vyākhyātum iṣṭatvāt, vyarthaiva pratyakṣapramāṇakalpanā saṃjāyate.*

"A man endowed [only] with visual awareness perceives blue, but [he does] not [perceive] 'it is blue'"[79] – because this authoritative text does not have as its point the expression of a definition of perception[80]; [p.75] and because of [its instead] demonstrating (*pratipādaka*) [merely] the insensate-ness (*jaḍatva*) of the five senses [i.e., their inefficacy except when joined to conceptual thought!], not on the basis of authoritative texts, either, [can it be said that] the quality of being perception belongs only to that awareness from which conception has been removed; hence, this [characterization of *pratyakṣa* as "devoid of conceptual elaboration"] does not make sense.

Therefore, in the world, if *any* (*sarvam eva*) subject of characterization – whether it be a bare particular or an abstraction – is not invisible, because of being directly apprehended, then it is established as perceptible, along with the awareness that has it as its object [which is also established as *pratyakṣa*].[81] But [the appearance of] two moons and other such [illusions] do not, from the point of view of the awareness of one without

[79] As noted by Stcherbatsky (p.172, n.1), Dignāga cites this quotation in his *vṛtti* to *Pramāṇasamuccaya* 1.4 (translated at Hattori, p.26; Tibetan at Hattori, p.179). In fact, Candrakīrti is here following Dignāga's text quite closely, considering this quotation in the same order as Dignāga does. Dignāga cites this as having been said "in an Abhidharma treatise" (*chos mngon pa las*); according to Hattori's n.1.36 (p.88), it is specifically the *Abhidharmakośavyākhyā* of Yaśomitra. Hattori here succinctly summarizes the motivation behind Dignāga's citation of this: "The expression '*nilaṃ vijānāti*' implies that one has an immediate awareness of the object itself. On the other hand, '*nilam iti vijānāti*' implies that one forms a perceptual judgement by associating a name with the object perceived. Thus, the above Abhidharma passage expresses the thought that perception is free from conceptual construction (*kalpanāpoḍha*)."

[80] Reading *āgamasya pratyakṣalakṣaṇābhidhānārthasya-aprastutatvāt* thus: the second genitive construes separately with the *-tva* suffix; it is not a *bahuvrihi* with the first. Thus, literally, "because of this scripture's having the quality of non-expression [*aprastuta*] *of the point* which is indication...." In fact, the more Sanskritically natural way to read it is taking the second genitival compound as a *bahuvrihi*: "because of the irrelevance of this *āgama*, *which has as its purpose the expression of a definition of perception*" – but this seems not effectively to counter Dignāga's appeal to it! The Tibetan seems to bear out my reading: ... *zhes bya ba'i lung yang mngon sum gyi mtshan nyid brjod pa'i don can gyi skabs ma yin pa nyid kyi phyir*, "because of the fact that this text is not on an occasion whose purpose is expressing a definition of perception."

[81] This, then, is the point Candrakīrti has been driving at all along: it is finally the adjectival sense of *pratyakṣa* (i.e., as meaning "perceptible") that is primary, with this then motivating the derivative usage of the word to denote as well "the awareness that has [any perceptible thing] as its object" (*tadviṣayeṇa jñānena saha*).). Perhaps the major point contra Dignāga, then, is that the scope of the word is *not* restricted simply to what's *kalpanāpoḍha*, and that the word is not ordinarily used only to pick out a privileged cognitive instrument – in which case, it must be allowed that "abstractions" (*sāmānyalakṣaṇas*), too, are "perceptible."

cataracts, have the quality of perception (*apratyakṣatvam*), while from the point of view of one with cataracts, [such illusions] have precisely the quality of being perceptible.[82]

But awareness which has as its object [something] invisible, [such awareness being] produced by a mark which has invariable concomitance (*avyabhicārin*) with the thing to be proven, [such awareness is known as] inference. The speech of those who are accomplished (*āpta*), who know directly things which are beyond the senses – this is [known as] tradition. Understanding (*adhigama*) of a thing not [previously] experienced, based on [its] similarity [with something familiar is known as] comparison, as [when it is said,] "a cow is like an ox." Thus, on the part of the world, understanding of objects (*arthādhigamo*) is established [as being] based on this fourfold [scheme of] reliable warrants.[83]

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[82] 74.8-75.5 "*Cakṣurvijñānasamangi nilaṃ jānāti no tu nilam iti" ity ca-āgamasya pratyakṣalakṣaṇābhidhānārthasya-aprastutatvāt, pañcā-* [p.75] *nām indriyavijñānānāṃ jaḍatvapratipādakatvāc ca, na-āgamād api kalpanāpoḍhasyaiva vijñānasya pratyakṣatvam iti na yuktam etat. Tasmāl loke yadi lakṣyaṃ, yadi vā svalakṣaṇaṃ sāmānyalakṣaṇaṃ vā, sarvam eva sākṣād upalabhyamānatvād aparokṣaṃ, ataḥ pratyakṣaṃ vyavasthāpyate tadviṣayeṇa jñānena saha. Dvicandrādināṃ tv ataimirikajñānāpekṣayā-apratyakṣatvaṃ, taimirkādyapekṣayā tu pratyakṣatvam eva.*

Candrakirti's allowing that illusory objects can nevertheless count as "perceptible" for those of faulty vision seems to be precisely the sort of move that is qualified by such later "*svātantrikas*" as Jñānagarbha and Śāntarakṣita. Consider, e.g., Ichigō's characterization of the typically *svātantrika* distinction between *tathya-* and *mithyā-saṃvṛti* ("true" and "false conventional"): "... Śāntarakṣita owes one of his definitions of conventional truth (i.e., *avicārraikaramaṇiya*, in MA 64) to Jñānagarbha's basic idea of conventional truth 'as it appears.' This being the nature of conventional reality, should we then also regard as conventional truth the double moon that appears to those who have defective vision? Partly in response to this issue, Jñānagarbha distinguishes two types of conventional truth, namely true and false conventional truth." (Ichigō 1989, p.169) But Candrakirti's point, I think, has centrally to do with his emphasizing that *all of us* who are not Buddhas are ultimately afflicted by "cataracts" (cf., Chapter 4, n.46, which cites *Madhyamakāvatāra* 6.214: "[Only] the omniscient wisdom [of a buddha] is accepted as endowed with the characteristics of *pratyakṣa*; anything else, because of its being ephemeral, is not accepted as *pratyakṣa*"). To the extent that this is Candrakirti's emphasis, it becomes less clear that he is simply saying that, on the conventional level, "anything goes." And indeed, Candrakirti may posit something analogous to the *svātantrikas' mithyāsaṃvṛti* in the form of "*alokasaṃvṛti*" ("non-worldly conventional"). See *Prasannapadā* 493.2-4, where Candrakirti explains why his favored expression is *lokasaṃvṛti*: *timirakāmalādyupahatendriyaviparitadarśanāvasthānās te alokās teṣāṃ yā saṃvṛtir asāv alokasaṃvṛtiḥ. ato viśiṣyate lokasaṃvṛtisatyam iti* ("Those who abide in vision that is distorted by senses afflicted by things such as cataracts and lust are 'non-worldly'; that which is conventional for them is 'non-worldly convention'. [It's in order to distinguish from that that] it's specified as 'conventionally true for the world'"). Nevertheless, to the extent that Candrakirti characteristically stresses that "conventional" is tantamount to "lacking in critical analysis," he invites some clarification such as the *svātantrikas* have ventured in this connection.

[83] Here, Candrakirti effectively endorses (as conventionally valid, at least) the standard Naiyāyika list of *pramāṇas*.

And these are established in dependence upon one another: given reliable warrants, there are objects to be known, and given objects to be known, there are reliable warrants. But it is emphatically *not* the case that the establishment of reliable warrants and their objects is essential (*svābhāvikī*).[84] Therefore, let the mundane be just as it is seen.

Enough of this subject (*alam prasaṅgena*). We will [now] explain the real matter at hand. The teaching of the dharma of the blessed Buddhas [was given with them] having located themselves precisely in the worldly perspective.[85]

[84] Here, Candrakīrti finally makes clear the presupposition that, on his view, guides Dignāga's project – viz., that his having abstracted privileged *pramāṇas* is tantamount to his having posited them as *independent* (or "essential," "natural," etc.) epistemic perspectives on what there is. Against this, what Candrakīrti has chiefly wanted to stress all along is that *pramāṇas* and *prameyas* are, like everything else, *upādāya prajñaptayaḥ* – that is (as he puts it elsewhere), they exist "simply as being mutually interdependent" (*parasparāpekṣāmātratayā*).

[85] 75.6-13: *Parokṣaviṣayaṃ tu jñānaṃ sādhyāvyabhicāriliṅgotpannam, anumānaṃ. Sākṣād atindriyārthavidām āptānāṃ tad vacanaṃ, sa āgamaḥ. Sādṛśyād ananubhūtārthādhigama upamānaṃ, gauriva gavaya iti yathā. Tadevaṃ pramāṇacatuṣṭayāl lokasya-arthādhigamo vyavasthāpyate. Tāni ca parasparāpekṣayā sidhyanti: satsu pramāṇeṣu prameyārthāḥ, satsu prameyeṣv artheṣu pramāṇāni. No tu khalu svābhāvikī pramāṇaprameyayoḥ siddhir iti; tasmāl laukikam eva-astu yathādṛṣṭam ity; alaṃ prasaṅgena. Prastutam eva vyākhyāsyāmaḥ. Laukika eva darśane sthitvā buddhānāṃ bhagavatāṃ dharmadeśanā.*

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